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MEMOIRS

OF

DR. BLENKINSOP.

—

VOL. I.

MEMOIRS

OF

DR. BLENKINSOP.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

INCLUDING

HIS CAMPAIGNS, TRAVELS, AND ADVENTURES;

WITH

ANECDOTES OF GRAPHIOLOGY, AND SOME OF THE LETTERS OF HIS CORRESPONDENTS.

EDITED

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PADDIANA."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

THE Editor's share in this Work may be gathered from the following letter:

Dear ——

Some years ago, on looking over the disjointed records of my life, you urged their being put into shape and published; kindly offering your assistance in bringing out the Work.

I am now disposed to avail myself of this offer, should you still be in the vein; and as you were an actor in many of the scenes described, who so fit to correct any little inaccuracies I may have fallen into, to strike out

what may be deemed superfluous, or even to add an anecdote which may have escaped me? In a word, will you be the Editor, on your own terms, and oblige an old and sincere friend?

A. B.

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MEMOIRS

OF

DR. BLENKINSOP.

CHAPTER I.

MY BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND EDUCATION.

I was was born in the last century, in a village near the ancient and holy city of Gloucester. My father was a man of independent property; that is to say, it amounted to a sufficiency for a liberal subsistence, without entailing upon him any great amount of care, either to collect his rents or to spend them when collected. In common par-

lance, he was an idle man, or one who had little or nothing to do; but he did it like a gentleman—no mean praise, considering the kind of operative who, according to the proverb, is "at work in an idle brain." With this short notice I shall quit, most probably for ever —some slight incidental notices excepted—the subject of my more immediate relations, partly from a feeling of filial piety with which their memories are invested, and partly lest a too minute description should lead to the identification of myself.

My godfather and godmother, as coming next to my parents, may perhaps demand some slight notice. They were excellent people, who lived respected, and died rich. I am informed —nay, they admitted as much themselves— that at my baptism they promised and vowed three things in my name—that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomp and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh, &c.

With respect to the first of these rash vows,

they were, no doubt, constantly engaged in earnest secret prayer on that point; but I cannot call to mind that they ever took any more active part to ensure his renunciation on my part: as regards the pomp, vanities, &c., they acted in steady concert up to the last moment of their lives; namely, by conscientiously withholding any pecuniary means by which they were likely to be encouraged. A maternal aunt in the country, an uncle in London, another in Scotland, and a third in Norfolk, comprised the whole of my kith and kin.

I dwell with little pleasure upon my infancy or boyhood. The former was decidedly tetchy and wayward; the latter disgraced by the meannesses, the cruelties, the lies, and the inherent baseness, which, with a few generous sentiments, form the general character of that period of life. I was, like most children, a selfish, greedy exacter of what I wanted, a dabbler in nastiness, and a sulk. I was also a roarer and a kicker at any exhibition of correction; hated of elderly gentlemen and grim maiden ladies,

and a difficulty to maids. Borne with as long as parental patience could bear such an infliction, and then expelled by force to howl in solitude, which was anything but peace. Even to this day I can call to mind the clutching and tearing of caps and curls, in the screaming scramble of ignominious ejectment.

Every bad passion found its place in me as a boy. I retired into the solitude of fields and gardens to wreak a vicarious vengeance upon objects which my imagination invested with a likeness of my friends, or my pastors, or my masters—of all, indeed, who thwarted or corrected me. Have I not stabbed cabbages, and wished they were aunts' hearts, dishonoured cauliflowers in their semblance of uncles' heads? Have I not sent the preparatory governess sprawling towards the sky in the likeness of a frog, and fired arrows into the ivy bush as the hazy prototype of the old nurse? With singular cowardice my mischievous enmities were peculiarly directed towards elderly unprotected females. How many times was the mop,

dipped in hot pitch, raised slanting against the door of that poor, half-cracked old woman, whose impatience and unreflecting temper rendered her forgetful of former experience or heedless of present danger—her window broken —the door torn wildly open in pursuit of the delinquent, and the pitchy mop received full upon her aged and venerable features.

I made but little progress in my early studies. The exact sciences—as summing—I peculiarly abhorred, and writing; ungarnished with flourishes, or a margin of demoniacal heads, was my abomination. My object, almost up to manhood, was to shirk all imposed tasks, though I would read through the livelong night, or even sacrifice a whole holiday for the book I loved.

At an early age I was sent to an excellent school, thought to be more excellent than it really was from the expensive terms and the good families which the pupils came of. It was at some twenty miles from home, and I was in the habit of riding there on horseback

with a servant, a distinction which—thanks to the inevitable laws of flunkeyism—procured me from all concerned a gracious reception. The gentleman who presided over the establishment, was a middle-aged clergyman, rector of the parish, and the parsonage had been enlarged from time to time as the scholars increased; when the number of these reached twenty, the "private family" was thought to be made up.

As a locality for a school it was perfect. Standing within a large elbow of the smooth-flowing Avon, the surface of the parish was an alternation of large pasture-fields and rough bushes and woods, the latter enclosing in their recesses spots of delicious retirement, uncrossed by paths and undisturbed by all inhabitants, save kites and squirrels. Bounding the parish on one side was the Breedon Hill, with its conspicuous summit-tower—a mountain still in my recollection, though since those early days I have crossed many a frozen, many a fiery alp. Such elms there were, too, about that

village! Even with my subsequent experience of tropical vegetation, they still retain in my remembrance a pre-eminence of enormity. The old grey church presided with a sort of maternal dignity over the other houses of the village, though most of them seemed to rival it almost in age. The originally rosy complexions of the brick houses had turned purple and grey with age, like the cheeks of their hale inhabitants; and the churchyard porch was surmounted by two trees so old, that we fancied we could trace in their trunks the rusty stumps of nails which had been driven in while the Plantagenets flourished—on occasion, perhaps, of displaying notices of a levy for the Agincourt campaign. The Rector, however, sternly maintained that they were the identical Baucis and Philemon, who had neither died nor been "stubbed and burnt" as the poet pretended.

Our rector-schoolmaster possessed, under a somewhat rough exterior, the most kindly feelings and the most perfect sentiments of a

gentleman. He was a Welshman, or had at least the bearing and appearance of one, being of a high spirit and a choleric temper—was of a sanguine complexion, stout, and of a middle height, and wore grey cord-breeches and top-boots with his clerical black coat and waistcoat, the latter well dusted with Scotch snuff. He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one; steeped in classical learning to the very lips; of a wholesome, untiring energy to grapple with difficulties and to conquer them, and little sympathy had he with the sluggard, or the indifferent, or the finical—least of all with the sneak.

He never flogged, for he thought it ungentlemanlike—besides that, he hated to be identified with the mere pedagogue—but though he used neither birch nor cane, yet he kicked and cuffed most energetically, and with the might of a strong man. His system was to trust to our honour.

"Gentlemen," he would say, "I have no 'bounds,' you have free permission to go where

you please. When I ask you where you have been you will tell me, I am sure, without reserve. Where there is no restraint, there can be no cause for evasion. I had rather you would not go too often into the town, but up the hill, or to the river, or into the woods, I have no wish to limit you. Having to deal with gentlemen, I can trust you—you never have abused my confidence, and I feel that you never will. If you think that there are any among you, likely to bring discredit upon us, you must repress the disposition to do so yourselves."

The effect of this confidence was to keep us very much at home. Where fatigue only was to ensue without the zest of resisting authority or infringing a law, there was little disposition to wander very far.

From this gentleman I acquired the first principles of graphiology. He had made a collection at considerable expense of the autographs of celebrated persons extending back to the early part of the seventeenth century,

and with some of an earlier date. To these he had added the writing of almost every person of his acquaintance, with all the remarkable characters of the day, appending to each specimen the true character of the individual, with remarks confirmatory or otherwise, of the rules laid down. As many of these were drawn with much humour, and set off with illustrative anecdotes, the book was not only a most ingenious exposition of the system, but exceedingly instructive and entertaining.

Our worthy master, though extremely sharp-sighted when he pleased, had the art also of not seeing and not knowing when it pleased him, to be either blind or ignorant. He did not know that we got down the pear-tree from the staircase window at four in the morning to take up the eel-lines, but when we brought him a monster eel or pike, the miraculous capture seemed nowise to surprise him. He was himself a devoted brother of the angle; neither did he in the least object to the more wholesale and comprehensive devices of trammels and

casting nets. In the use of the latter he was an adept, and could throw the net in any desired form to fit the water it was cast in.

Almost rivalling his Reverence in these accomplishments, were the old shoemaker and the baker; time out of mind the only representatives of those trades in the village, the only difference amongst them being that the shoemaker had turned his attention to pike, the baker to bream, while the parson was equally successful with both—and they neither had the least chance with him in the use of the net. In such a spot and with such examples, one became a fisherman as a matter of course. There was some little rivalry in the schools of fishing, as each placed himself under the guidance of one or other of the three professors, but failure produced no heart-burning, while success was cordially hailed by all.

When we lured his Reverence to the river, which could never be effected without every concurrent advantage of weather and water, it was a day indeed! and with what triumph did

we call in our way home upon the old shoemaker and baker to show the basket-full we had secured. Sometimes the triumph was the other way. These crafty old functionaries had heard of the expedition, and each silently stole away to some favourite hole kept well baited; and if, after quietly regarding our bag, they could produce a larger fish than we showed them, there was no end to their crowing and chuckling.

Our greatest triumph was when we fished the brook with trammels, setting them across the deep holes, and poling under the banks to dislodge the large lurking chub, who were driven to strike into the net. Nor was the general fry of the contents of our basket for supper, the least interesting part of the day's sport; his Reverence presiding and criticising the proceedings.

Nor did these occasional relaxations tend in the least to weaken the authority of the worthy chief. He was of that manly character that can afford to descend to trivialities without a loss of

dignity, and resume authority in a moment. Sometimes he was taken in with his own excitement. When a clumsy reading of a favourite author—as Horace or Terence—was given, he would seize the book and pour forth page after page of terse and nervous translation, and dismiss the class in the utmost good humour, though perhaps none of them had construed a line. When, however, he detected wilful inattention, he cuffed the ears of the culprit with great vivacity; and there was something peculiarly hard and bony in his cuff, from at least one finger being bent in holding a pinch of snuff.

Though our society was upon the whole extremely unanimous, yet accidents will happen even in "the best regulated families," and quarrels take place in the best conducted schools. One only, of which I was the hero, or rather the victim, I may be permitted to describe. We had a Quaker boy at the school, who, in addition to other peculiarities, had that of being the only day scholar. His father, a rich retired merchant, lived in a prim but comfortable house,

enclosed with its excellent garden by the thickest, the trimmest, and most compact, impassable hedge I have ever seen. The old gentleman had good store of the finest apples, of which he was justly proud, and which by means of the quickset hedge and a sharp look-out, there was every chance of his keeping to himself.

To defeat this cherished object, and partake of the forbidden fruit, was a prime object with some of us. After a careful reconnoitring of the premises, the most accessible point seemed to be a corner, most distant from the house, and where the hedge was rather thinner than elsewhere. It was decided, after many consultations, to make an attempt when the Quaker was at tea, about half-past five in the afternoon; young Broadbrim returning home invariably to assist at that meal. Everything seemed favourable. The worthy man was nowhere to be seen; the impervious hedge being peeped through in all available places. The plan of operations was this: a sack was to be thrown on the top of the hedge, upon which

two boys were to be hoisted, one to remain crouched on the sack as a look-out, while the other dropped into the garden, and tossed over the hedge as many apples as he could possibly secure while the Quaker was taking his tea; then to escape over the hedge with the assistance of the look-out. We drew lots for every part of the adventure—who was to lead the forlorn hope into the garden—who to remain on the hedge, &c. These matters being perfectly settled: "Now, then, over you go!" The sack was thrown on the hedge, and the hoisting just about to be undertaken, when there arose on the other side a most unexpected apparition—the grave, square face of the Quaker, surmounted by his ample hat.

"Thee'd best try it!" said the Quaker, very quietly.

For a moment or two we were fairly paralyzed by the unexpectedness of the thing; then snatching off the sack made the best of our way home.

The storm of indignation excited by this

humiliating failure was not likely to pass without somehow affecting young Broadbrim. Accordingly, when he presented himself next morning he was cut by every one; and during the morning school hours every little art was put in practice to insult and annoy him, taking for granted that he was the tell-tale who had blown up the whole scheme. Emboldened by the unconcern with which he took it all, we became more pointed in the allusions when we went into the play-field; and in the excitement of the moment I proposed that he should then and there receive a good threshing.

"Thee'd best try it!" said the young Quaker, quoting his father's words.

This was not to be borne, it was adding insult to injury, and I gave him a box on the ear.

"Wait a bit, if thee please," said the Quaker with extreme calmness, and beginning with great deliberation to take off his coat. Although I had the advantage of my adversary in height, he was decidedly older than me by two or

three years. No one, however, had been able to ascertain his age, for, reserved as he was on every point, he was most guarded on this. To any direct question he usually answered, "May be ten, may be twelve; what dost thee think?" He was, however, fourteen or fifteen.

The Quaker having taken off his coat, proceeded to fold it and lay it gently on the grass; but some doubts arising in his mind as to the propriety of leaving it there—fear, perhaps, of damp or injury from the general hostility manifested towards him—he took it up again, and poised it carefully on the top of some palings hard by, gently trying the balance to see if it was likely to fall; and taking off his beaver, laid it with equal care on the top of his coat. Then he rolled up his shirt sleeves, turning the roll outwards, like a blacksmith, till he got them well above the elbow; and it was evident from the care he had bestowed on this part of the preparations, that he might fight for a week without a chance of their coming down. Having concluded his arrangements, and displaying

extremely muscular arms, he came forward with the civil notice: "If thee be'est ready, I am."

We set to, and in a very few moments I found out that I had not the slightest chance with the athletic Quaker. His face was as hard as one of his father's apple-trees, and almost as insensible, while he hit straight and hard, and to the purpose: he also had the great advantage of keeping his temper, while I entirely lost mine. Every vindictive passion I had, was roused on that occasion; above all, the sense of shame and humbled pride gave me uncommon strength and energy. A few most hearty hits I planted on his bony face, and the blood from his nose ran copiously over his shirt and drab breeches, to have spoiled and damaged which afforded me vast satisfaction. But all would not do; the Quaker, as cool as ever, planted his blows with more and more certainty as my eyes swelled; and when they were finally closed, and I could see no longer, I was forced by the other boys to give in.

Having decided the matter triumphantly, I

was told that my adversary, after duly wiping his face and hands, unrolled his sleeves with the same deliberation he had used in putting them up, and put on his coat, and lastly his hat, after wiping the nap with his sleeve. He then said to me: "When thee wants any more, thee canst have it," and so went home.

Happy days!

> "And dear the school-boy spot,
> We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot,"

says, somewhat haltingly, the noble poet. Whether Breedon Hill is the mountain it still seems in my fancy—whether the trees are as large, the air as fresh, and the meadows that bound the deep, dimpling river, as flowery and beautiful as is the image of them that dwells in my mind, I intend on some future occasion to ascertain.

One night, about an hour after bed-time, a sort of indistinct alarm spread through the house. There was slamming of doors, hurrying about the passages, calling up the servants,

and some one having left the house, the galloping of a horse was heard leaving the stable-yard, in the direction of the town. Presently all was still, except the suspicion, rather than the certainty, of distant sounds of wailing and crying, almost stifled by the closed doors. In something less than an hour, the galloping of two horses was heard, and a footstep quietly ascended the stairs. Suspense became at last intolerable, and many heads were thrust through the half-opened door. After some time, the master's bed-room door was opened, and there came out the old apothecary who attended the family. To our questions, he raised his hand, and enjoined silence. "My poor boys," said he, in a hoarse whisper, "you have lost a friend —a most kind friend—that you will find it hard to replace. Go to bed; and let this awful lesson teach you to be prepared at all times!"

It was a most dismal night, we could not believe that the master was dead—it was impossible! So entirely well, so full of rude, lusty health and spirit; no symptom of prepa-

ratory illness. He was struck down by apoplexy, and died in a moment.

The next morning we were all sent home in chaises—the most dreary journey boys ever had from school.

But if I had lost one friend, I soon discovered that I had found another. My father was married—but a few days—to an elderly, sharp-visaged widow, whose presence I soon found had a wonderful effect upon home and its influences, and after a short trial of the new *régime*, I heartily accepted an invitation from a maternal aunt to visit her at a quiet little village about midway between Gloucester and Bristol.

My aunt Joan Featherstone, was rather an extraordinary person, and generally considered eccentric. Of a blunt address, generally very taciturn, extremely ungainly in her person and dress, she was looked upon with wonder by strangers; but a better creature never lived. She was a maiden, lived comfortably in a neat, but unadorned house with her female servant

and a boy. In person she was tall and thin, of irregular, but not repulsive features, had enormous hands and feet; wore in the garden, and sometimes even in the village, a white hat, and was pretty generally known as "Jack Featherstone."

Perhaps at no period of our history was the taste in dress at a lower ebb than during the early part of the present century. At the French Revolution there had been a general downfall of furbelows: the taper waists and the ample skirts—whether kept out by hoops, or merely flowing round the person in the large folds of some stiff and costly fabric, had disappeared. A Roman taste prevailed. Because Brutus stabbed a tyrant, people wore their hair "à la Brutus," that is, cropped; and rendered the more hideous by short, hard-twisted curls, arranged formally round the face. The back hair of ladies, however luxuriant, was sacrificed without scruple. The ladies set up a style, something approaching in their imaginations, to that of the Roman

matron. True, the Roman matron had no waist, so to speak, but this we could not wholly abandon, so made it as short as possible, while the body of the dress was so low as rather to resemble a deep hem on the top of the skirt—to call it a "body," was ridiculous; and the more to carry out the classical idea, the skirts were barely full enough tightly to encircle the lower person.

Any one who examines the portraits of that period, must be struck with their unbecoming indelicacy. A cropped head and little round curls, a body scarcely reaching the top of the shoulders—a waist close up under the arms, and a straight, close sack of a skirt, the outline of which fell on all sides with the unbroken regularity of a plumb-line, to somewhere short of the ancles, when it was cut straight round, disclosing a wide interregnum of cotton stocking between the dress and the shoe.

The dress of the men was somewhat better. It consisted of a coat and waistcoat, but little differing from those of the present day—the

dress coat, not the surtout—tight pantaloons, and either boots or short gaiters, or else breeches and boots, or long gaiters. Till the Cossacks came to Paris in 1814, no trowsers were worn either in France or England by any one above the age of thirteen. A boy of any pretensions to dandyism was in Hessians, or tops at twelve. Men's neckcloths were monstrous till reformed by Brummell, and the example of foreigners. The custom was to put on four, five, six or more white neckcloths, one over the other, till an amazing pudding was formed round the neck, which came up close under the ear. There was a regular promotion —or rather degradation—of neckcloths; each got a step towards the neck every day as the innermost was discharged. The outer neckcloth of to-day was the second to-morrow, as a clean one was put on—the next day third, then fourth, and so on till it had passed quite through the pudding. Amongst elderly persons of a conservative tendency, pig-tails and powder partially lingered.

My aunt utterly disregarded dress, beyond what sufficed for comfort and propriety. She wrapped an old brown silk handkerchief round her head, and being an economist, she even curtailed the scanty proportions of the fashion, and had her dresses narrower and shorter than other people: in fact, she looked as if she had contrived to get into the single leg of a large pair of trowsers. Though somewhat impeded by this straightened costume, she strode vigorously about the country, and had a way of slewing herself over the stone stiles which was, perhaps, more dextrous than graceful.

She was the best maker of ducks and drakes I ever saw, never passing a pond, still less a river, without exercising her skill; turning her head sideways to watch the flat stone dapping along the surface, and snubbing her nose with her forefinger knuckle while she snorted a sense of triumph. She often whistled as she went along, and generally did so when she worked. Altogether she was a singular person. The nearest approach I ever heard her make to a

laugh, was when I once inadvertently asked her, seeing the inconvenience arising from her dress, why she did not dress like a man. Now, as leathers were the only wear in that parish, I suppose some ludicrous image of herself in such a costume came across her fancy, and made her snub and sniff more violently than ever.

In the village where my aunt lived, there was only one person above the position of a farmer; and those were nearly all in the possession of small holdings. The exception was, singularly enough, a physician. He had retired from extensive practice in one of the large midland towns, and settled down in the country, where he hoped to find complete retirement. Never was man more deceived. His fame followed him. First he was asked to prescribe out of charity, then as a friend, then to meet other medical men. He was a good-natured man, and yielded by degrees—some said that he got heartily tired of his village life—certain it is, that in self-defence he was obliged to give up

gratuitous attendance; that he got rapidly into practice again, and at the period of my visit, regularly tired three horses a day.

Between my Aunt Jack and Dr. Mellish a sincere friendship existed. The Doctor humoured her little fancies, and could appreciate the good points which were hidden under the rough and unpromising exterior.

"What do you think of the Doctor?" said my aunt to me one day, rather abruptly.

"A very nice man—very clever; and how nicely his leathers are cleaned, aunt!"

"Poof! how should you like to be a doctor?"

"Why, I'd rather be a gentleman; but still I shouldn't mind it with plenty of good horses to ride over the country."

"My dear boy, we can't be all gentlemen and ladies, as you call them; or idle people, as I call them. Some of us must work. Remember that your prospects are now different from what they were. Your father has a new wife—may have another family. What he

could have been thinking of *I* can't think! most of what you would have had will go elsewhere. Better be a doctor. Come, let us go and talk about it."

Seizing her hat and shawl off the peg in the hall, where they usually hung, if not thrown down on a chair or the floor, she strode with me to the Doctor's house.

"This boy would like to be with you; what do you think?" said Jack, accosting the medical man, rather abruptly. "Any little matter of money I'm sure we could settle; what do you think?"

Dr. Mellish was blandness itself; his smile was of the softest and most winning I have ever seen; but he was, nevertheless possessed of courage, energy and indomitable activity. He almost laughed outright at my aunt's abrupt address.

"Do you really think of this?" he said very kindly, "or are you, rather, bent upon it? Remember what it is—a noble profession, but a laborious, a dirty, perhaps rather a contemned

one. No one but an enthusiast can succeed in it. It is an imperious mistress; it must have your whole heart or it jilts you! Better think further of it, and take a few rides with me before you decide."

"Ay, do," said my aunt, "and now go home while I talk for half an hour with the Doctor."

Nothing more passed that day on the subject of my new profession; but the next morning, almost before I had done breakfast, a servant led a horse to the door, and presenting Dr. Mellish's compliments, requested the pleasure of my company for a ride.

I found the Doctor rather chafing at the unavoidable delay which I had caused him. "We have eight miles to ride," said he, "and only an hour to do it in." This, well mounted as we were, was rather incomprehensible to me.

We made play along the turnpike road for about half the distance, and then abruptly turned up a narrow lane, almost over-canopied by boughs. The turnpike roads of that time would now be considered impassable, for McAdam's

name was not then heard. The practice was to fill up the ruts and holes with stones about the size of a human head, and trust to the waggon wheels for breaking them. Neither was the quality considered. The nearest quarry furnished it, and whether limestone or sandstone, was a matter of indifference to the contractor.

"I suppose you don't mind being bogged," said the Doctor, urging his horse into a pool of water, which occupied the whole breadth of the lane. "I know the soundings of most of the roads hereabouts; this is about four feet or four and a half," (here he went up to the girths) "a little more after rains," (the muddy water came up to the saddle flap) "but the bottom's hard enough, when you get to it. Hold up your feet either forwards or backwards—backwards I find best, because you can more easily kneel on the saddle in a bad place. But we must push on. Here's a bit of galloping ground;" so saying, he turned his horse through a gap in the hedge leading to a marshy field covered with sedges, and we galloped across it

in a halo of mud and water, as if we had been riding a race. "Over she goes," said the Doctor, charging a fence, "forw'rd's the word! I know old Marks won't mind our riding over his fences, now we're going to take off his leg. A pleasant cantering country—here's a rasper—sit well back at him, and give the horse his head!" It was a high post and rail fence, meant to supersede an old hedge which still partially existed, with a deep ditch full of water beyond. The Doctor cleared it with better success than I did, my horse getting his hind legs in the ditch, from which I could not easily extricate him.

"In this kind of practice," said my companion, "it is necessary to have our instruments well secured; you see I have mine strapped fast round my body. I lost them once when I was going to amputate an arm; but I sharpened up a cheese-knife and borrowed the carpenter's saw, and got through it pretty well. But here comes the bad part of the road; this is very awkward in a dark night."

We had crossed a marshy valley, and were

now at the foot of a range of rough hills, partially covered with wood and dotted with houses. The road, which led nearly straight up the face of the hill, was worn out of the solid rock, partly by water, partly by such traffic as could get along it. It most resembled an irregular staircase, some of the steps of which were a yard deep.

About a quarter of a mile on the other side of the hill, we pulled up at a small farm-house, almost hidden amongst trees; and approached through a fold knee-deep in rotten dung, in which were standing a few cattle and a couple of rough horses, eating their fodder out of large crates—while a goodly array of pigs and poultry were picking amongst the dry straw thrown out of a barn where two men were threshing.

We were received at the door by the farmer's wife, a buxom woman of forty, of a naturally cheerful expression, though now evidently in trouble.

"Ah, Doctor, Doctor!" said the woman'

"you're not come to do it I hope! I hope you'll spare him—pray, spare him! What shall we do if he's a cripple?"

"My dear Madam," said the Doctor, "you're a sensible woman, if it must be done, you will make up your mind to it. I don't cut off legs for fun; I hope there may be no occasion for it, we shall see." Here he put several questions relative to the patient's health, and then we were ushered into the sick room. The man's leg had been crushed by a cart wheel in the villainous staircase road we had come by, and the injury was so dreadful that amputation above the knee, and pretty high up in the thigh, was necessary.

After a very careful examination of the limb, and of the patient's general state of body, the Doctor said to the farmer's wife:

"That was a very decent woman I saw here the other day—she knows something of herbs?"

"Not a better in the whole country."

"Just step for her, it is not above half a

mile, and I want a fomentation. Bring her back with you. Go yourself, don't trust to the girl, and be sure to bring her if she's at home. We'll sit down by the kitchen fire."

Our hostess bustled to do the Doctor's bidding, and she was scarcely past the fold when he desired me to fetch the two men out of the barn.

"Quick; we must have his leg off before the wife comes back. But stay," said he, "let me look at you. You never saw a knife used upon live flesh? You don't funk? If you do, conquer it. Every feeling is to be conquered by force of will. You funked at that rasper, but conquered it. I think you'll do. Now fetch the men."

"My good friend," said the Doctor to his patient, "you will have to lose your leg, or be a helpless cripple for life, even if your life is spared, which I don't warrant. It is too entirely smashed to be ever brought into any form of usefulness again. You won't move from your

bed for six months at least if you keep the leg; I think I can ensure your being out of it in six weeks if you do. Take your choice."

Meanwhile, every preparation had been made, and the man's consent had scarcely passed his lips when the tourniquet was applied, and the first cut made.

"Attend to me," said the Doctor, "watch everything I do, and I'll explain it afterwards."

I felt a sad sickening and swimming of the head, but kept it down as well as I could, never for a moment taking my eyes off the quivering flesh. I nearly gave way when the bone was being sawed, but happily did not faint, and was as alert and attentive as possible. The operation, I think, scarcely exceeded ten minutes, and when the wife returned, the patient expressed himself comfortable, and nearly free from pain.

"That's a turkey and chine," said my companion, as we rode out of the fold. "I wonder which of those fat porkers it is to come from. My fees are various. A fever case I put down

at a flitch of bacon; a bad cold, at half a dozen pigeons; meazles or croup, a couple of fowls. The next two cases are feeless, unless the man recovers and snares me a hare. This is a rascally place, this little hollow below us, where you see the marsh. Always fever of some kind; now it's fever and small-pox."

We dismounted at a small lath and plaster cottage, romantically situated at the foot of a rugged bank, out of which grew large oaks, throwing their huge arms over the cottage, as if holding it under their wings: before the door was a sluggish stream, making its way from the adjacent marsh to a green stagnant pool.

"This is a bad typhus," said the Doctor; "how are they?" to an elderly woman, who opened the door.

"Well, they be'ant dead, nor they be'ant hardly alive—there they lies—and whether they be asleep or dying, I can't justly say. They do breathe, however."

The house was pretty evenly divided into two rooms, both very small, and each lighted

by a small casement. In the inner room, lying side by side, were a man and woman in the prime of life, though to all appearance dead, excepting that they breathed. Their heads were shaved, and covered with wet rags; their eyes shut; the features pinched and rigid; the lips black, and drawn away from the teeth with a ghastly grin. On a bundle of clothes upon the floor, lay a child of nine or ten years old, looking scarcely so ghastly as the others; but restless, and apparently in great pain.

After every inquiry had been made, we came out and sat down by the fire. "I think they'll do," said the Doctor, to my great surprise, "the fever's abated; but the child will die, probably. We'll step to the other house, and see how the small-pox gets on. You've had it? They are very bad cases, all confluent."

Bad cases indeed—horrible to look at. Three children, from eight to twelve, and one grown-up girl, lying in a small filthy room, the window close shut—the features of their faces almost wholly undistinguishable under a mask

so loathsome, that imagination shrinks from it. This was worse than the amputation, and I was fain to rush into the fresh air.

"Rather sickening, you found that? the worse because these pig-headed people have a horror of fresh air. I had a great mind to knock out the window, but if any of them died—as two I believe will—it would be assuredly put down at my door; so we must do the best we can. These, my young friend," said the Doctor, as we rode away, "are the scenes which men in our profession have to go through—not once and away, but through their whole lives, and that without the stimulus of glory, or adequate reward. The honours of the state, and the applause of their countrymen are for those who destroy life, not those who save it. Did you ever hear of a physician or surgeon being made a viscount? Viscount Jenner, M.D., Lord Harvey, M.D.—how odd it would sound! Knighthood we do obtain, in common with Tomkins the cheesemonger, when he is made Mayor, and takes up an

address. Strange to say," continued he, "I like this rough, ill-paid practice better than I did rolling about in a carriage, and picking up my guineas; there's no accounting for taste, you'll say. It is certainly against all etiquette for me to assume the general practitioner, when I have been a physician all along; but what would the poor devils do? The poor old fellow who farms six families at five pounds a year each, could not ride twenty miles if his life depended on it; indeed, he could not get at this hill at all. So the people must call upon him, and you see what little chance there is of some of our patients doing so. Now, I like it—it is as good as a day with the fox-hounds, and certainly as useful. A little trying in dark winter nights, when the lanes are half, or even quite frozen; with the accompaniments of snow, sleet, hail, &c.; but it's all to be done by force of will."

My aunt was extremely pleased by the impression I had made upon Dr. Mellish, by his

saying he thought I should do, and his willingness to take me under his especial instruction.

I was soon regularly launched in my new duties, which commenced at seven in the summer and eight in the winter, when people flocked in crowds to the Doctor's residence for gratuitous advice. I was present at every case, which was duly explained to me either at the time or immediately afterwards. I made up every medicine from a regular prescription handed to me—entered the same in the book, with the treatment and progress of each case, while I diligently studied the theory of medicine and surgery, and grounded myself in a knowledge of anatomy. For general information, or even severe study, the Doctor's well-selected library afforded ample means; and the literature of the day was supplied in part by a book club to which we subscribed.

It is needless to dwell longer upon this portion of my history. During two years I passed a happy though laborious life. Dr. Mellish

and I, were, I believe, mutually satisfied with each other; but it was necessary that I should go through the regular course to enable me to take degrees, and be admitted of the profession—whichever branch of it I might ultimately choose. While this matter was in agitation, I paid a short visit to my father, who had retired to a residence in the country. He was deep in speculation on the advent of the millenium, though I could clearly see that there was but little likelihood of its being established in his own family.

It was in the middle of the terrible winter of 1812, that I undertook the journey to London; a very difficult thing in those days to what fast coaches, good roads, and railroads, have subsequently rendered it. It was not considered absolutely necessary to make your will before the commencement of the journey, but still it was a matter of great fatigue and discomfort. The "heavy Gloucester" coach took about twenty hours to reach London under ordinary circumstances, and my

aunt's residence was at least four hours from Gloucester; but now the snow lay yards deep on the ground, so that I was obliged to sleep in that town to enable me to start by eight the next morning. The deep snow had encumbered the ground for more than three weeks, and in some places had been drifted twenty feet deep over the road. In such places a cutting had been effected; not very unlike, though on a smaller scale, the chalk cuttings on the Brighton railway.

At last the day came when I was to be launched alone upon the world. I took an affectionate leave of good Dr. Mellish, who furnished me with letters of introduction to Cooper, Cline, Abernethy, and other celebrities of London, and with very strong and flattering testimonials of my acquirements and industry.

From my aunt I parted with sincere regret, which I felt was mutual, though it found no vent in words. At the crisis of taking leave, I beguiled her of a kiss, the only one, I am inclined to think, that she ever bestowed either

upon male or female. In an attempt to whistle after it, she broke down, and added an explosion of sobs to the abortive melody. Furnished, through the kindness of my aunt, with an abundant supply of pocket-money, and full of excitement at the new scenes I was about to enter upon, I fear I did not feel so poignant a regret, as would have become me at parting with so true a friend; but in such cases, the truest sorrow is always with those who are left behind.

When I came shivering out to the coach the next morning, I was accosted by an individual of amazing amplitude, built up with coats to a degree of tightness, that seemed to force an undue proportion of blood into his face, a small portion of which only was visible between his flat hat and cotton shawl.

"Be you the gentlemen as is booked outside to London?" said this functionary. "Beg your pardon, Sir, but you be'ant a going sure-ly to face the Northleach country in that there coat?"

I informed him that I not only had that intention, but the Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Middlesex country to boot.

"Well, Sir, you knows best; but I wouldn't send a son of mine out in such weather in a single Benjamin if I know'd it—no, nor a double Benjamin neither, unless it was as he'd promise to drink a glass of purl every time as they changed horses. In sich a case as this, it ain't choice but necessity."

Thinking there was something sensible in the proposition, I requested my friend to procure such a quantity of the beverage in question, as would be equivalent in his judgment to a single Benjamin — a commission which he entered upon with an alacrity of which I previously imagined him incapable.

Having discussed this invigorating, though rather nauseous mixture, which the refined reader may require to be told is composed of hot ale and gin; and of which my new-found friend and adviser took a proportion amounting to at least a double Benjamin, we

mounted the box, and commenced our silent progress through the dirty snow of the street. In addition to the team of four horses, we had a pair of posters, which was the regular allowance throughout the journey, except in the case of a long hill, when two more posters were added. How we ever got up the long hill on this side Cheltenham, is to me a mystery to this day. It was a hillocky surface of hard-beaten snow as smooth as glass. There seemed to be always two or three horses down, but on several occasions the whole eight were down together, and with the coach sliding bodily down the hill.

"What I wants in sich a case as this," said the coachman very huskily—for we had taken another Benjamin at Cheltenham, "is a anchor; for it ain't nowise pleasant to think of going into that there smooth field of snow—you thinks it's a field I'll be bound—Lord bless ye, there's a brook a running twenty foot deep under that!"

It was the custom of those remote times for

the outside passengers to walk up every considerable hill as a matter of course. The coachman pulled up at the bottom with "I must trouble you now, gentlemen, if you please." To keep your seat would have been considered a positive injury to the proprietors, and a hale person under middle age, even inside, was rather expected to do the same. In my case the custom was dispensed with, for I believe the coachman rather feared to lose the small protection which my body afforded him from the cold north wind, which bid fair to freeze us as we sat. Next to the Yorkshire Moors, the coldest part of England is the stone wall country between Cheltenham and Oxford; after that comes Narberth and the appropriately named Coldblow; a proof, if any were wanting, of the great comfort to be derived from trees and hedge-rows, of which those places are wholly destitute.

At length, in spite of hot brandy and water, cold brandy and water, hot ale, and cold ale, the coachman was fain to give in. "I'll be blest if

I can hold 'em any longer," said he. "Do ye take 'em if it's only for five minutes." Though little better than the coachman, I reluctantly took my hands from under the apron and received charge of the reins, the coachman taking advantage of his leisure to restore a little warmth to his hands, by every device he could think of.

It was some time after nightfall, and would have been dark but for the snow, and about midway between Burford and Witney, when the horses suddenly shied to the right, and I distinctly saw, not far before the wheel, the body of a man lying, bent up, and immediately in our way. I pulled the right side reins and our wheels just cleared him; but, what with the shying of the horses and the energy with which I pulled, we got off the road; the coach gave two or three heavy bumps as we went from one hole to another, and at last over we went into a deep bank of snow, which, though it broke our fall, yet buried us completely under it. I was considerably stunned by the violence with which

we fell into the snow-bank, though the coachman's body in some measure made a way for me. There was a terrific plunging and kicking, and, half-stifled as I was, I could hear the screaming of several voices, no doubt proceeding from the inside. At first I fancied I had fallen amongst the horses' feet, such severe blows did I receive about the head and shoulders; but these I soon found proceeded from the heavy boots of the coachman, who seemed in a death struggle, with his head and body completely buried, and his heels vigorously engaged upon my person. To get him out was my first attempt; no easy matter from his bulk and helplessness. Having achieved this, our attention was turned to the insides, who contrived to scream, though the noise was much subdued. In a frantic effort to escape, a little fat man—the only male passenger—had become fast stuck in the window, and the efforts of the three other passengers (ladies) whose efforts, under the immediate dread of suffocation, were given with little concert, now pulling him back, then thrust-

ing him forward, without the least reference to any damage of body or clothes; while his yells and imprecations added a bass to the three trebles within the coach. His coat-tails had already gone by the board, but the loss was more than made up by the superior holding-ground by the waistband of his nether garments, in which three pairs of hands could find ample room.

There is a Turkish punishment usually resorted to, to extort confession from a criminal, that of enclosing the lower half of his undressed person in a bag full of live cats, who are excited to the utmost by being pinched and tormented from the outside. In some such state as this was the present condition of the Witney grazier. He would not go back, that was quite certain; the leverage of his arms, which were outside, giving him an immense advantage, but this was not apparent to the ladies, who, having so firm a hold in the waistband, were united in a determination to pull him back out of the window. When people are, or fancy they are, in immediate risk of suffocation, to say nothing of other

terrors, they are apt to act with an unreflecting vigour proportioned to the imminence of the crisis. That he kicked there can be no question, but what was this to people absolutely choking with terror and want of air? The grazier's braces being of leather, were faithful to their trust, but the frailer buttons they were attached to, gave way. This gave him a freer use of his arms, and he redoubled his efforts. No doubt he had confidence in his kerseymeres, or he would not have set them upon a single cast. Another struggle, and he is free! when Rip! Rip! Rip! each proclaiming a continuous and lengthy tear, and the grazier emerges from the window with four large kerseymere flaps hanging over his boots.

Our next care was, to see after the person who had been the primary cause of the accident. He proved to be a young man, dressed like a farmer, and stupified with cold and liquor, but alive. Him we carried to the coach, and opening the door, dropped him into the three ladies, who though they were all in strong

hysterics, protested vehemently against the introduction of a corpse among them. With the assistance of the post-boy and the grazier, who exerted himself in the snow, notwithstanding his defenceless state, we contrived to extricate the horses, and get them on their legs. Our next move was to send on the post-boy, mounted, to the turnpike-gate, where he would be directed to the nearest farm-house; and there endeavour to procure sufficient hands to right the coach, an undertaking which we after several attempts, were wholly unable to accomplish.

When the post-boy had started, I began to feel myself so perished with the cold, that I entered, without leave asked, into the coach, where the ladies were standing with their heads out of the door, like young birds in a nest. The grazier speedily followed, glad to hide his dishevelled condition, though one of the ladies had the unreasonable cruelty to raise an objection to his entrance. Lastly, the coachman, finding himself to be the only outside passenger,

seated himself upon the side of the coach, and slewing his legs round, suddenly dropped into the midst of them of us, bearing down all opposition by the force of gravity.

"I ax your pardon, ladies and gentlemen all," said he, "but in sich a case as this, when cerimony a'int so much a object as the preseva-tion of life, I make bold to come. Ax your pardon, Ma'am, I do indeed, I thought it was the panel I was standing on, not your foot. I'm a sinking through this here lower windy, and I'm a'most knee-deep through it now, however; but you see, ladies, as I'm a family man as has a wife and children, none on e'm growed up, and if so be as anything was to happen to me, you'd never forgive yourselves. Ax you pardon, Ma'am, but I'm obleeged to lay hold of summut, as I'm a sinking. If that there young fellow as we put in, and is some-where's down amongst you, was just put across this here lower windy, I'm sure he wouldn't object, cos why? I'm a being froze in the feet."

We had been about a quarter of an hour in this state—comfortable enough as far as I was concerned—though dreadfully squeezed according to the ladies; and the coachman protesting that he was frozen to the knees, and "it getting uppards and uppards," when a man came riding slowly along the road. We all shouted to him at once, and in the confusion he could make out nothing.

"We're freezing in the coach," said one of the ladies, having obtained a momentary pause to put in her solo.

"A easing in the coach!" said the man, "oh —ah—well—very well for them as likes it, I dessay—a easing in a coach! Well I wish ye good-night, ladies; wish ye good-night, gentl'men," and so he rode on his way, in the full conviction, no doubt, that it was some peculiar party of pleasure, got up by the gentlefolks, tired of ordinary amusements.

In about an hour's time, the post-boy returned with the horses, upon which were mounted as many men as he could collect, with

ropes, a pole or two, and a lanthorn. With much ado we got the coach on its wheels, and, subsequently, the coachman on his box: this functionary, by the bye, had been diligently stamping about the while, to get, as he said, the life into his legs and feet: and then we proceeded to Witney.

The grazier was put down at his own door, holding the skirts under his arm, and making the best he could of his other disaster. The maid received him with some wonderment, which changed to a fit of laughter when she turned round to identify the paper parcels which the coachman brought up. This brought out the other maid and the boy, who, joining in the laugh, brought out the mistress, who took up the case in a serious light. She would not be pooh-poohed by such enigmatical phrases as "Never mind, my dear, I'll tell you all about it presently," but appealed to the coachman.

"Well, Ma'am, you see as it was done by the ladies in the coach. In sich a case as this, when they fancied as he was a suffocating on

'em, they wasn't just theirselves, you see, so they catched hold on him any way—skirts or what not—and it's a mussy if they haven't a scrat him as well."

In this state of mystification we left her, threatening to report the coachman to his employers, for admitting such people into the coach, muttering between whiles: "Pretty ladies indeed! Suffocating them, was he? Well, I declare!"

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW RELATION.

We arrived in London without any further adventure, and were set down at the Green Man and Still, between two and three in the day, instead of an early hour in the morning.

I was the bearer of a letter to my Aunt Featherstone's brother, a gentleman of reputed fashion and fortune, who lived in a handsome house in St. James's Street, and was said to know everybody of consequence about town; though being somewhat exclusive, and

totally different from my aunt, there had been for some years little or no intercourse between them. Putting myself in a hackney coach, I ordered the man to drive me to some hotel in St. James's Street, thinking to reform my outward man a little after the events of the night, before I presented myself to my fastidious uncle.

Before I left the country, it had been seriously argued between my aunt and Dr. Mellish, whether it would be most advisable to get a new suit made for me to go up to London in, or wait till I arrived there. My aunt, caring little for fashion, advocated the former plan, but was overruled by the Doctor; who very justly considered that a country-cut coat, though ever so new, would find but little favour in the eyes of a dressy man like my uncle, who would assuredly fit me out afresh, without any reference to the date of my habiliments. Now these it must be confessed, were but of a sorry fashion; and the little merit they might have had

originally, was much impaired by long wear.

The conventionalities of dress were much more thought of then than now. For a boy to remain in trowsers after eleven or twelve, was thought to be some degradation of his incipient manhood. A jacket—that is to say, a short, bob-tailed coat—was allowable up to about fourteen, after which his skirts lengthened prodigiously; and his nether garments were either breeches or tight pantaloons. Now, I had remained in my jacket and trowsers up to sixteen, and had so completely grown out of both, that a large interregnum of stocking existed between my trowser and shoe, and also between my hand and sleeve. To crown all, my great coat, or single Benjamin, as my friend the coachman called it, had been made some years, and seemed quite withered away in its proportions—downwards in the neck, and upwards in the sleeves, to an extent that left the jacket far behind it.

Having been well brushed down by the waiter, put on a clean neckcloth, and made myself, as I thought, quite presentable, I forwarded my aunt's note by the boots, and waited in some suspense for the answer.

"Colonel Featherstone's compliments, Sir, and will be happy to see you, if you'll step over."

I cannot help smiling, even now, when I think of the confidence with which I presented myself in such a costume in St. James's Street—in which and Bond Street, the fashion of London was then concentrated—at three o'clock too, about the busiest time, and with a purpose of calling upon one of the best dressed men in London; who made the science his study, and judged of people very much by their outward appearance. I began to think there was something wrong as I passed the coach-stand, and the waterman called out to one of the men in the rank: "I say, Bill, twig that

chap; he've put his feet a bit too far through his trowsers, haven't a?"

I found my uncle seated by the fire with another gentleman, in a large and very handsomely furnished room, amply supplied with luxurious chairs and sofas, and the walls wholly covered either with fine paintings or mirrors. He was a man about fifty; tall, thin, and rather pale, of a dignified and *distingué* presence, and had a somewhat indolent and *blasé* air. (The reader will I hope excuse these, to me, hateful words, but they are such as our language affords no equivalent for.)

My uncle received me cordially enough—shook hands with me, and then holding me at arm's-length, burst into a roar of laughter.

"Why, my dear fellow! Well—upon my soul—do look here," said he to the other, "see how they make clothes in Gloucestershire."

The other gentleman was dressed in a

brown great coat, with a deep fur collar coming down low on the breast, and cuffs of the same. He had a shrewd and somewhat sarcastic expression, as he took in my whole person at a glance, and smiling quietly, resumed his contemplation of the fire.

When I told my uncle of our disaster on the road, and that I had been thirty hours travelling outside the coach, he rang the bell to order some mulled wine. The other gentleman roused himself, and said, with an air of much grave earnestness: "My dear Featherstone, do bring your nephew to the fire. To think what people go through! And so unprotected as he is too about the wrists and ancles!" And here he favoured me with another glance and quiet smile.

"What on earth shall we do with him?" said my uncle.

"Lock him up in a spare room and keep the key yourself, but send at once for people to dress him—then let him go to bed till

the country—even beyond the science of a provincial town.

"I see, Colonel, I see," said the tailor, surveying me; "dear me! but little science as you say, Colonel. Bless me! truly curious, indeed! quite a pity, I declare. Can I do anything with him, Colonel? now there you really must be joking. Can I do anything with a good figure of five feet ten? at least I should say—something of your own figure, Colonel; he'll be as tall as you in a couple of years."

A large order, as it then appeared to me, was given by my uncle, who delighted in dressing me after his own taste. The strictest injunctions were given that a coat and waistcoat should be brought to be tried on the same evening in its unfinished state, and sent home ready to wear at breakfast the next day; and another coat and waistcoat for evening wear to be ready by dinner time. All this the tailor promised, with his hand upon heart. Packing up

his patterns and measure, he moved towards the door; but recollecting something, he returned, and coming close to my uncle, said, with a low bow:

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, and yours, Sir, but—I feel that you'll excuse me—but—I must apologise for my freedom—but—I trust that this gentleman is not going out, because, you see, Colonel, it will come out that I'm his tailor; and gentlemen who see him in his present state, may, you know, Colonel, remember him, and—in short—it might injure me in my business."

My uncle promised seriously that nothing was further from my intention than to present myself in my present condition, and with this assurance the tailor bowed himself out.

An interview was soon after obtained with Elphick and Hoby, with a hatter, a glover, and a person who supplied Brummell himself with neckcloths; and soon after dinner, which my uncle took with me at home, I gladly went to bed.

The comforts of my uncle's house astonished me. The deep-sinking down bed with its fine Holland sheets, the soft and complete carpeting —we, in the country, having only a small strip by the bedside, the rest being bare boards— above all, the enormous fire, which I found in the morning had been renewed by some mysterious agency, and burnt as fiercely as when I fell asleep. At ten o'clock, a hair-dresser was introduced to arrange my head according to the reigning mode ; and shortly after, the tailors, punctual to their promises, came bowing in with their bags full of new clothes.

It was not in the nature of things that I should be insensible to the favourable change in my appearance. Viewed from head to foot in the long mirror, I almost doubted my own identity. My progress of dressing was a protracted enjoyment. I had drawn on a pair of blue cloth pantaloons, rather elastic, and fitting with all the perfection of Mr. Elphick's cut. To these I added a pair of Hoby's Hessian boots, of delicate proportions, well wrinkled

down the leg, and just meeting the bottom swell of the calf. The proper time of the day for the neckcloth was not come: the adjustment of that essential article was invariably postponed till it was time to go out, lest the lounging habits of the breakfast-table, or the paper-reading after it, should derange the folds. Meanwhile, a light scarf was thrown negligently round the neck. I then put on a buff kerseymere waistcoat, and a dark green coat, all admirably made.

My uncle was delighted. He turned me round and round, and even his critical eye failed to discover any material flaw. In such a matter, however, it was necessary to take further advice, so he rang for his valet.

"They're a pretty fit, Sir," said this functionary, who I found was a man of immense judgment in such cases; "a very pretty fit: still I think, Sir," addressing me, "you feel a *leetle* cut under the left arm. If you observe, Colonel, this slight pucker, coming as it were to a point, that must be a cut, Sir."

I could not say that I felt anything wrong—I thought it a remarkable good fit throughout.

"Ah, Sir! you may think. That's a cut, Sir," (to my uncle), "it must be. The least easing will do it—a quarter of an inch. This I think would be sufficient, without cutting out the pucker and fine-drawing it. That's the Prince's plan; but that Mr. Brummell calls a botch. I've heard him often say—and I dare say you have too, Sir—a tailor that's obliged to cut out and fine-draw is a botch. He's for preserving the integrity of the cloth. He says it shows science."

Upon this weighty authority the easing plan was resolved upon, and subsequently executed, to the satisfaction of all parties. With respect to the pantaloons, no fault could be found, after the most searching and approved taste. I was directed to sit, stand, walk, mount upon chairs, but the handiwork of Elphick came through triumphant. This pleased my uncle extremely.

"Why you know well enough, Allen,"

addressing the valet, "that there's never anything wrong in Elphick's make. I consider it impossible. Don't you remember, before I employed him, how I used to ride backwards down the bannisters for an hour together before I could get my leathers up; and even then was sometimes obliged to go to the back stairs, because they were narrower. The trouble that fellow gave me is inconceivable. Would you like to see my leathers?" said my uncle. "Of course there is a fire there?"

"Oh dear, yes, Sir!" said the man, with marked emphasis, as if the bare supposition of such a neglect as that, of leaving the room where the leathers were kept without a fire, was tantamount to accusing him of a great crime.

We passed first through my uncle's bed-room, a noble room, luxuriously furnished, and containing six large chests of drawers.

"Linen," said my uncle, slightingly, with a wave of his hand towards them, and passed into the bath-room, a much smaller apartment,

with a white marble bath in the corner, and every appliance necessary for such an apartment—including three towel-horses, one large enough for sheets, all hung with fresh linen.

The next apartment was also small as compared to the first bed-room, and contained only four chests of drawers, made much wider than I had ever seen such things before.

"These are coats," said my uncle. "I don't keep much of a stock of them because the fashions change. They lie here, you see, simply doubled lengthwise. These are morning, those evening. Here he opened several of the drawers, which were rather more than half full. Those two small chests are waistcoats, morning and evening. The next is the 'breeches-room.'"

This apartment was the same size as his bed-room, and the only one, except the bath-room, without a bed. A mass of chests of drawers, touching each other, went all round the room except in the window places.

"How many pairs of breeches do you think

I've got, Allen?" said my uncle, appealing to the valet.

"Well, upon my word, Sir, I couldn't charge my memory with it—I couldn't indeed. I run 'em over by the book every week. There's forty pair of leather breeches in this chest, that I know, because there's nothing but them in it. Then, there's leather pantaloons—winter pantaloons morning,—ditto, evening—(laying his hand upon each chest as he went on). Summer pantaloons, morning—ditto, evening—breeches, various, morning—ditto, ditto, evening — light summer — boating. Stockinet, various—shooting, and gaiters. By the bye, Sir, this reminds me, I've often intended to speak to you about them. These two bottom drawers contain some of your 'bannister breeches,' as you call them. I don't suppose you'll wear them again, Sir, and they are taking up room—"

"Oh, confound them," said my uncle, interrupting him, "do what you like with them. Never let me see them again. Give them to

your relations in the country—but be sure don't give them to any bodythat has not a good pair of bannisters in the house."

"By the bye," said my uncle, when we came back to the drawing-room, "has Elphick given you any breeches-pockets?"

"Oh! dear yes; and good large ones too."

"Then here's something to put in them," handing me a roll of what the valet would have called 'notes, various,' amounting to about fifty pounds, "and keep them buttoned as much as you can."

It is quite unnecessary to say, that if not actually at the "summit of human felicity," I was pretty well up the hill: or rather, I was sailing on that tide, "which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." My uncle was kind in the extreme. He took the greatest pleasure in showing me the town, and introducing me to his friends. I was quite a new sensation to his bachelor life, he delighted to see that I was well received, and when any one

said, "your nephew employs a good tailor," or "what capital fitting pantaloons those are," his pleasure was unbounded. In these times such remarks would be ridiculous or impertinent, but when Brummell reigned in the kingdom of fashion, they occupied people's serious thoughts.

I met the Beau sometimes at my uncle's, and more frequently at parties; but he passed his eyes across me without the most distant symptom of recognition. Hearing so much of him, I naturally studied his character. It was evident that the grand scheme of his life and to which all his energies were given, was that of upholding his own supremacy. He had arrived at the summit of fashion by his own tact and cleverness, aided by his well-known intimacy with the Prince Regent, and he held the position against all assaults. He was possessed of great natural shrewdness and a sort of intuitive appreciation of others—he saw through a man at a glance. His appearance was perfect. Nothing could equal the impressive

steadiness with which he could invest his features, while there was a latent sarcastic smile in his compressed lips, ever ready to expand into the precursor of a quiet jest that would gibbet a man to the whole town. His sarcasm was not perhaps withering, or deep, and certainly never laboured; but it always told with a peculiar sting from its personality. I may take as an instance of this his speech to, or rather at, George the Fourth, who cut him in passing into the Hanover Square Rooms, and passed on to Lord Alvanley, with whom he spoke a few words. When the King moved on, Brummell said, loud enough for him to hear:

"Alvanley, who's your fat friend?" No man, however, could unbend more gracefully than he—he could even indulge in rather boisterous familiarity, but let no one presume upon it to treat him with the like in return. He kept everybody at a certain distance, and no one could more dextrously wither a growing intimacy without giving any hold of offence.

He dealt in surprises, too; when a man was put forward for his ridicule, the chances were rather in favour of its falling on those who trotted him out. He could say, and sometimes do, a civil thing with extraordinary grace, of which the following may be taken as a specimen:

My uncle and I dined one day in the neighbourhood of Berkeley Square, and were returning home between twelve and one—for dinner parties lasted rather longer than now. It was a beautiful night, so we walked. As we were passing homewards, down St. James's Street, my uncle stopped at a door, and said: "I think I shall go in here for half an hour; will you come?"

I had no idea of the nature of the place; nor indeed should I have declined to accompany him if I had. He knocked at the door, which was instantly opened, and we passed up stairs to the first floor. A servant in livery opened the door, and we found ourselves in a large, handsome room, lighted by

a large chandelier, depending from the ceiling, and with plenty of sofas, easy chairs, and every convenience for lounging, round the walls. The centre of the apartment was occupied by a very large, and extremely solid round table, round which ten or a dozen gentlemen were seated; while others were dispersed about the room, and some partaking of a handsome cold supper, spread across the end of the apartment, behind which stood a servant, supplying the applicants with any wines or refreshments they pleased to call for. That part of the great round table which faced the space between the windows, was hollowed out so as to receive the knees of a man, who sat upon a seat as high as the table itself, and who had complete command both of seeing and acting over the table, every part of which he could reach with a small wooden toothless rake. In the centre of the table, which was without a cover, was inlaid with a lighter kind of wood, a small circle, and there was a raised ledge all round

the outside, to keep the dice from rolling off.

The gentlemen round the table were more or less engaged in the game of English hazard, and considerable sums of money were staked and passed from hand to hand, by the turns of that fascinating game. There was little or no excitement: the game passed evenly on, and scarcely anything was said, except by the groom porter, who sat upon the high seat, and asked the caster's main, called his throws, stated the odds, and pushed the stakes to the winner.

My uncle took a seat at the table, and I next him. I knew several of the players, and immediately opposite to us was Brummell, setting the caster occasionally, and generally losing; but no recognition passed between my uncle and him—nor indeed with any one else. We had watched the progress of the box about half round the table, when at length it was passed from my right hand neighbour to me. My uncle had raised his hand, expecting me

to pass it as a matter of course, when much to his surprise, and not a little to my own, I took the box and gave a few rattles of the dice.

"Your stake and main, Sir, if you please," said the groom porter, gently extending his rake towards me, as if to stop my throwing before those necessary preliminaries had been gone through.

Now, I knew no more about hazard than I know about the substance of the sun; but I had observed that every one who took the box had called either five, six, seven, eight, or nine—but principally seven; so I tossed a solitary pound note within the central ring of the table, and called: "Seven's the main!"

There was a general titter round the table at my humble stake—for ponies and fifties had been played for; and I confess I was more than half ashamed of it myself, and inclined to throw some more notes to it, when Brummell said quickly:

"I set the caster, and take it, all!"

This increased the titter into a loud laugh.

"Seven's the main," cried the groom porter. "Eleven, a nick; the caster wins!"

I left the two pounds down, and called seven again.

"Seven, the caster wins!"

I left the four pounds on the table, and won again with a main of five, after throwing seven, but refused to take the odds, which were in my favour. I threw in eight mains, with various stakes, from ten pounds to two or three, Brummell setting me every time.

"You can't think," said he, to one of his neighbours, with his inimitable air of mock gravity, "how much I am indebted to this gentleman. He has taken off my bad luck at the easiest rate. I must have saved—let me see—I should think at least a hundred pounds by him already."

This set the table in a titter again. At last I threw out, having won about forty pounds.

My uncle passed the box, and made no comment whatever upon my play.

About this time a large, heavy man came into the room, with a rolling gait, and his hands deeply buried in his breeches pockets. He wore a blue coat with brass buttons, a black silk waistcoat, black breeches with buckles at the knee, and black boots without tops, coming up to meet the breeches. His hair was quite white and close cut, but a pair of large grizzled whiskers came down on either side of his face, and nearly met under his chin. His features were very large, and his eyes prominent: his appearance altogether was extremely dignified. That he was either a man of high rank, or very rich, I inferred from the deference with which he was received, and a place made for him at the table. He took his seat opposite the groom porter, without looking to the right or left, and fixing his half-closed eyes steadily on the centre of the table, sat breathing deeply and audibly. He did not play at first, and seemed waiting for a stake that was worth

playing for. At length some one staked a pony, and he stretched forth his large, coarse and not particularly clean hand, with some crumpled notes, and covered it. The groom porter opened some of the notes, took out the amount of the stake, and pushed the remainder back to him. This gentleman did not speak, neither did he take the box, but set the caster occasionally, neither counting what he put down nor what he picked up, but thrusting the crumpled notes into his breeches pocket.

At length the box came round to me again, and I was determined either to win something more, or to lose at least a portion of my winnings. I set a ten-pound note, and called seven.

"Crabs! the caster lost!"

I had another chance, being entitled to take a back hand. Nothing daunted I put down another ten-pound note, and called seven again.

"Seven's the main, seven! Ten—ten to

seven; two to one against the caster. Do you take the odds, Sir?"

"Yes," throwing down two more ten-pound notes; thinking, in my confusion, that I was betting the odds instead of taking them, and only discovering the mistake when I saw my two last tens covered with forty pounds. There were now sixty pounds down to be decided, sooner or later, by my cast of the dice.

"Ten to seven, two to one against the caster."

The odds were taken to the extent of some hundreds in private bets round the table, and there was a complete circle of crumpled paper round the outside of that little magic ring, which contained my comparatively insignificant venture.

"Ten to seven," repeated the groom porter. "Six. Ten to seven, nine, ten to seven, five. Ten to seven, six and four, the caster wins!" whereupon he shovelled towards me the sixty pounds worth of dirty paper.

I was now thoroughly excited, but I stuck

to my stake of ten pounds, occasionally taking or betting the odds. I threw in thirteen mains, and when at last the luck turned, I found my great-coat pocket pretty well distended with bank-notes.

"I think I shall go," said my uncle. "I suppose you don't want to stop here?"

I did want to do so uncommonly, but thought it would be ungracious, so even moved towards the door. In our way we passed the fire-place, where Brummell was standing. To my extreme surprise he took me by the elbow and said, in tone which I felt was thoroughly earnest:

"Let me advise you never to come here, or to any such place again. You *must* lose in the long run; you are not made to win. You have won to-night; leave it while the recollection is pleasant; don't continue to come till you gain bitter regrets from such places. Good night."

The thing was so unexpected, and so strangely serious coming from such a quarter,

that I confess to the weakness of feeling my eyes fill with tears. I remembered that odd warning, and never did go again — but once!

It is very strange that neither in our walk home, nor at any other time, did my uncle mention, or even allude to, the events of that night, or the actors in them.

I was excessively anxious to go to bed when we got home, that I might count my winnings. I emptied the notes upon the table, smoothed them out, placed them in classes, and then counted the whole, which amounted to £302.

I have been silent upon the subject of my professional pursuits all this while; but for the first three weeks I was in a perfect whirl of pleasure. Operas, plays, balls, dinners, with their dressings and preparations, took up my whole time; and even if they had not, I had fallen in with some idle fellows, who would assuredly have monopolised the remainder. But at the end of three weeks my appetite for mere pleasurable excitement began to pall;

there was, after all, a sameness, as well as a frivolity, which induced some feeling akin to disgust. I felt that men were made for something else than eating and drinking, and opera dancers and Hessian boots; and I told my uncle that I thought it was time to begin work again. He took everything coolly but a misfit; so he only said, "Very well, you know best."

I then opened to him my little plan of taking a lodging in some quiet street near the Strand, where I should be somewhat beyond the suction of the fashionable whirlpool, and able to pursue my studies while I was still within easy reach of him, to whom I seriously felt a strong and grateful attachment. My uncle merely answered, "Very well, you know best."

My first care, after this arrangement had been carried out, was to enter myself at the hospital, and present my letters to the three great men to whom they were addressed. Strange to say, they each cast upon me very

much the same sarcastic look and smile with which Beau Brummel had greeted me on my first arrival; the effect of the ill-made, awkward clothes upon the one, being exactly what the more elaborate outfit was upon the others. I soon showed them, however, that though I dressed like a gentleman, I could rough it with any one of them. I followed my profession most diligently—gave up theatres—eschewed ale and brandy in the morning—to which the other students were too much addicted; and I kept myself as much as I could from their evening orgies. I am bound to say that there was a strong taint of vulgarity, as well as coarseness of manners, amongst the young gentlemen of that day. Indeed, the tone of society generally, was that of superficial, dancing-master politeness, with coarseness both under the surface of speech and act. Nor must the ladies be wholly free from censure. Upon the dictum of Dr. Johnson, that Beatrice was the most lively of Shakespere's heroines, the flippancy of Beatrice was set up as a model

for imitation; and if a girl could say a smart thing after the Beatrice fashion, however impertinent it might be, she was sure to be praised for spirit and liveliness.

But the change of manners is scarcely so great as that which has taken place in our social habits, especially in London. The full tide of human existence flowed then as now, but it flowed in comparative quiet, without the intolerable roar of omnibuses, and the terrific tumult of our modern streets. The modern Londoner can scarcely imagine his streets without omnibus or cab. The hackney coaches, the stages, and the mails, were the only public conveyances. It is almost as difficult to imagine the Thames without steamboats.

There was something in the old hackney coach that was gentleman-like, in spite of its filth. It was not built for a hackney coach, and you rolled along easily upon springs, which had probably been tempered to the nerves of duchesses. True, they were put to the most

filthy uses. Corpses rode in them from the suburban burial-grounds to the hospitals; and, judging from the odour which generally pervaded their interior, you might suppose that a diseased limb had been jolted off in the transit, and left behind in the straw. We of Guy's and St. Thomas's knew something of such matters. There was a small society of resurrectionists, who kept a great coat and hat in which they dressed all their subjects, female as well as male; and it is incredible the number of old gentlemen in that identical costume, who had evidently lost the use of their limbs, that were tenderly handed down upon the steps of those two magnificent institutions. I think I hear them now:

"Take it easy, Sir; lean upon us; don't attempt to exert yourself, pray. Better carry him in, Jem, hadn't we?"

"Ay, to be sure; he can't walk, bless ye!" So they picked him up, and brought him in with an assiduous tenderness which could not fail to edify the jarvey. When the elderly

gentleman happened to turn out a female, it seemed to add a pungency to the joke.

I think the turn-out of private carriages was better then than now; there were more fine horses, and more fat bewigged coachmen, and finer hammer-cloths and embossed harness. Jobbing was unknown, and great people would not condescend to such shifts as now. The only carriages—then so called—were coaches, open landaus or barouches, and chariots. Curricles there were, and plenty of four-in-hand coaches; but the whole tribe of broughams, clarences, pilentums, alberts, &c., which exhibit cruelty and convenience at the tail of a single horse, were not then invented.

The reader of the present day may, perhaps, guess what was the state of the streets at night when there was no police; for the old watchmen, worn out before they came to that employment, were perhaps worse than nothing, as inducing contempt for such a shadow of authority. The police, however, were of more use in restraining the rich than the poor. The

gangs of lawless persons who elbowed people off the pavement—who seized a wife or a daughter from the arms of a husband and a father, and passed her round to be kissed—who wrenched off knockers, broke windows, pulled down signs, and boxed charleys, were gentlemen, or those who passed for such. If Sir Robert Peel had done nothing but establish the police force, he would have been one of the greatest benefactors this country ever had. And yet with what ceaseless ridicule they have been assailed almost up to the present hour!

As my object is merely to cull the more prominent passages of my life, I will dwell no longer upon my sojourn in London at this time. Nearly two years slipped away in an alternation of hard work and amusement. I heard frequently from my aunt and the worthy Dr. Mellish, who was delighted when I found time to recount my experience in the dissecting room; and the sayings and doings of the magnates of the profession. I pass to a wholly new and unexpected phase of my life.

I was reading in my lodging, in Craven Street, one night, when I received a note from my uncle, couched in these words:

"Come to me to-morrow at eleven, without fail."

My uncle was rarely so emphatic in his notes; so I naturally concluded it was something of importance.

"I want to ask you a question," said my uncle, when I met him. "How should you like to wear a red coat?"

At first I was completely mystified, and imagined he meant to take me with him to Melton, perhaps to hunt.

"I was dining," continued my uncle, "the other day at —— House, and the Duke said to me in the evening, 'Colonel Featherstone, if you have any young relation or friend that you want to get into the army, there's a good opportunity for him. Volunteers are wanted from the militia; I could put him into my regiment, and he could go into the line with the complement required by his rank; and

perhaps get a step before he went.' I told the Duke I should like to do something for you, but you were studying medicine. 'Well,' said the Duke, 'that is for you to consider. He may be a surgeon in the army if he likes, and it will do him no harm to go out as a lieutenant previously.'"

I felt as if a thunderbolt had fallen on me. My whole scheme of life was unsettled, if not upset. I had no abstract love for the medical profession, but had adopted it as the means of acquiring an honourable and independent subsistence; but my uncle's proposition seemed to point at something less laborious and much more agreeable. He surely would not have proposed this change of plan, unless he had made up his mind to support me in my new profession, and to supply funds to purchase me onward to an independent grade. No one knew better than he, the misery of that state where an officer is stuck fast for want of money—be his merit what it may—while it becomes the stepping-stone of any one who

can produce the price of the step above him; than which, a more depressing or galling position cannot be occupied by a man of spirit or feeling. Still I could not say to my uncle, "are you prepared to help me on if I adopt your scheme?" Delicacy—perhaps false delicacy—forbade it: I thought it would be unlike a gentleman even to hint at such thing.

I asked my uncle's opinion, which he declined to give in direct terms, but I could see nevertheless that he was all for the military scheme. I saw him every day upon this momentous question, which was all in all to me, and his bias towards it was more apparent at each visit. Gradually we came to talk of what I should have to do when I joined—what was required for my outfit—who was to make the uniform—and so without any direct persuasion on his part, or consent on mine, I found my original profession shelved—or only a shadow of it held forth in the prospective hope of the army surgeoncy. At length the matter was

clenched, and we both waited upon the Duke to tell him so.

Never was my heart so prophetically heavy as in that short walk from St. James's Street to St. James's Square; but unhappily there was no audible voice to say, "turn again Whittington." I am more and more convinced, however, that coming events *do* cast their shadows before, and that something whispered me that in the hazard of life I was going to throw crabs.

We knocked at the door of a noble mansion in St. James's Square. The Duke was at home, and we were ushered into a small library, or rather, business room; where, at a table covered with papers, a large, elderly, dignified man, holding a double eye-glass across his ample nose, sat reading a letter. I had no sooner set eyes on him, than I remembered the heavy, half-asleep gentleman at the hazard-table on the memorable night when I had won the £302. His Grace received us with

great courtesy, and with a winning, affable dignity which I have never seen exceeded in any man. He told us that a commission only required filling up and signing by him to entitle me to all the rights and privileges of an ensign in his militia regiment, then quartered at Brighton; that he thought he could venture a promise of promotion within a few months, when, if I felt inclined, I might no doubt volunteer to the line; but he civilly urged me to consider the thing carefully, and perhaps he might have the pleasure of our company at dinner on Thursday next.

The invitation was accepted by my uncle for both of us; and I confess that the agreeable manners of his Grace, together with a lurking inclination for the change, and my uncle's now avowed advocacy of it, completely overcame my few remaining scruples.

"We might as well settle about the uniform at once," said my uncle, "for you are going to accept the appointment, and you may as well get a good outfit at once, for it's only

changing the facings when you volunteer; and there's no great time to be lost, for you'll have to join on the 24th." Whereupon he rang the bill for Allen, to consult with him upon the momentous choice of a tailor, the making of uniforms being, according to my uncle, a province of itself.

The valet, after some consideration, recommended a German, who resided in an obscure place where Regent Street now stands; and in an hour's time I was measured and booked as an ensign of foot.

Tristram Shandy says: "My father was a great motive-monger, consequently a dangerous man for a person to sit by." I was far from being a motive-monger at that time; but circumstances have since rather forced me into that line, and I regret that experience should have taught me that to probe a man's motives freely is, nine times in ten, to find something hollow and rotten at the bottom of them. It would be unkind, as well as too severe, to apply such terms to my uncle;

but I am entirely convinced that his principal motive for procuring me this appointment, was the new excitement of fitting me out in uniform.

On the appointed day, my uncle and I appeared in due time at his Grace's mansion. Two other gentlemen were of the party; one a bustling man of business from Sussex, a factotum, as it seemed, of the Duke's; and the other a clergyman, a heavy man of letters, who had written some county history under the Duke's auspices.

The Duke's *cuisine* was celebrated, and his wines also—of which, truth to say, all present very liberally partook. After a while, the noble founder of the feast fell asleep in his chair, while the man of business passed the claret with great vivacity, and did the other honours of the table as if the Duke had been absent in person instead of in consciousness. He also engaged me in conversation, and sounded me in every way. That his Grace was not very sound asleep I have reason to think, from sub-

sequently finding him acquainted with almost everything that had passed.

My uniform was made on the most approved principles, under the immediate superintendence of my uncle and Allen. It consisted of a red jacket, made rather long in the waist, and with short skirts, pepper and salt pantaloons, or rather a compromise between pantaloons and trowsers, fitting rather tightly down to the calf, and then opening out into a trowser termination, with several buttons at the bottom of the leg, to enable the wearer to get his Wellington boots on. Strange to say, the summer dress was white kerseymere pantaloons and Hessian boots; while the duty dress consisted of short white kerseymere breeches and long black gaiters—a costume which united to the short jacket showed no particular taste in the inventor, and was decidedly inconvenient to the wearer. The cap was conical, not unlike the present, but with a sort of plate of the same material in front, three inches higher than the crown.

In these more enlightened days, one justly wonders at the extreme absurdity of giving an officer four different kinds of costume to wear on as many different occasions: one for ordinary wear in winter, a hotter and more inconvenient one for summer; another for wearing when on duty, and a fourth for full dress, being short breeches, silk stockings, and pumps; and, greatest of all absurdities, this was the full dress of the heavy cavalry also.

Faulty in convenience, and hideous in fashion as the dress was, it gave great satisfaction to my uncle, who did not fail to line the pockets in a manner out-doing his former liberality.

CHAPTER III.

CHANGE FROM MEDICAL TO MILITARY.

On the morning of the 23rd, my uncle accompanied me to the coach in Piccadilly. It was perfect in its appointments and cattle to an extent that we have now no remaining examples of. To my immense surprise, my uncle shook hands with the coachman, whom I distinctly remembered to have seen staking ponies at hazard, and whom I soon found out was a Baronet.

After five hours' travelling behind teams

that would have done credit to any private carriage in the kingdom, we pulled up in the Castle Square, in Brighton; and I handed the Baronet half-a-crown, feeling some delicacy in presenting a man of title, and my uncle's friend, with the shilling which others were content to give him; and by some means or other I found myself at the now rather obscure inn, the "White Horse," in East Street, then one of the best in the town.

Brighton was then a little focus of fashion, more so, I suspect, than it has ever been since: perhaps it appeared so from the smallness of the place. Westward, the town did not, I think, extend beyond the battery; eastward, it was bounded by the Crescent; and the old church stood entirely in the country, and was approached by a road between two flint walls. Every house in the place was covered with glazed tiles, some few of which still remain in the retired streets. The Steyne, now comparatively deserted, was enclosed with a simple

wooden post and rail, which people could get either over or under, was the centre of attraction, and the favourite promenade, to an extent that had nearly worn off all the grass; and there were no shrubs or flower-beds then, as now.

I was now fairly launched upon the fashionable world. The officers of the regiment I belonged to were, for the most part, men of property, and decidedly more civilians than military men. Some, however, were old officers from the Line, who having married, or coming by other means into property, had settled down into the easier service. My uncle was well known to some of them, and as I was considered his undoubted heir, I received attention accordingly. In fact, my position was considered enviable in the extreme. I set up a couple of horses and a private servant, hunted with the Sussex harriers, and had an occasional day with the fox-hounds; dined at the 10th mess (then in the cavalry barracks),

spent my money thoughtlessly and foolishly, and to crown my absurdities, fell in love.

This latter passage in the life of young gentlemen of seventeen would scarcely deserve mention from its singularity, nor indeed would so common an occurrence have found its place here had it not been the indirect means of bringing me into a more serious scrape. It is necessary to prepare the reader a little for this.

Amongst the lighter occupations incident to my new position, I had never wholly lost sight of my old profession. After the adjutant and the commanding officer, nearly the first person I became at all intimate with was the surgeon, whose character I liked extremely. He was the bluntest, heartiest fellow I ever knew; a man who, in every transaction of life, went short to the point, spoke his opinions out at once without caring who heard him, but clothing them with such irresistible good

humour, that it was impossible to take offence.

I fell in love in manner following—that is to say, that one fine morning taking an early walk in that wild sylvan region now occupied by Kemp Town, I perceived moving along the face of the Downs a something like a long, party-coloured centipede, bending round the little impediments of the ground, and clearly shaping its course for the Crescent. Notwithstanding the distance from which I viewed it, I at once arrived at the conclusion that it was a lady's boarding-school. Even to this day I find something interesting in such processions. There is a freshness about the individuals composing them, a glossiness of hair, and a brightness of eye, which after years are apt to dim. There is an honest confidence in the faces of the little ones, gradually ripening into consciousness and coquetry as you move up the files, while one or two of the leaders have a

toss of the head and a jerk of the shoulder, which say, plainly enough: "Ah, you may think what you please, but I'm not such a child as you take me for!"

In those days I was exceedingly curious in such matters; so, taking a course at right angles to the path of the centipede, I managed to get upon their intended path a little before they arrived at the point of junction, when, bringing my left shoulder suddenly up, I ran down their flank on a pretty close parallel line, telling off the probable age of each file as I went along: seventeen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen, thirteen, twelve, eleven, ten, nine, eight; and finishing with a vinegar visage of fifty.

Although I went mechanically telling them off in this fashion, yet all interest had ceased after No. 2. There were such a pair of blue eyes, and such a box of ivory, in that particular vertebra of the animal, that to all intents and purposes I was dead to the rest. The

scorching glance emitted by No. 2 at once made roast meat of my heart; and I strolled onwards, conscious indeed, but in the condition of an overdone kebaub.

It was impossible to pass them again—that I felt; but there could be no harm in seeing where they went to. Assuming the same rate of speed at which they moved, I kept at a respectful, yet not an excessive distance, sufficiently near, indeed, to make it apparent to them when they turned their heads — which I rather thought they would do on arriving at the cliff, particularly as it might be done without any very conspicuous or reprehensible twist of the neck—that they were undergoing the polite attention of being followed. It was pretty to see how my expectations were realised, and how face after face was turned towards the Downs as they rounded the angle into the road. It was like receiving the independent fire of a line of vessels, from frigates to small craft, and finishing with a whole broadside of

black looks from the Admiral. In a few minutes I saw them safely housed in the Crescent.

From that day forth my morning walks took the direction of the East Cliff, and for the most part not unrewarded. The blue eyes became curious, partly assured, conscious, and finally, I thought, gratified.

One morning, in the blaze of early June, I was passing the Crescent as usual, and curiously scrutinizing the windows, in the hope of seeing some bright face lurking behind the dimity, when, such was the fervour of the sun coming right at me from Rottingdean, that I was fain to shade my eyes with my hand, for the more complete examination of the premises; when suddenly I ran full, and rather violently, against a lady, walking in a directly contrary course to mine. My elbow being in advance, rather broke the force of the blow, but at the expense of the lady's bonnet, which was

considerably bent in, and the luxuriant hair disarranged.

I hastened to make every apology; to express my sincere grief—almost despair—my most anxious hope and trust that I had inflicted no injury, &c., &c.

"Oh! never mind," said the lady; "I'm not at all hurt; and I suppose you are not much. It did shake me a little certainly, but I'm much better. I don't think I shall faint, but I may. Stay by me for a moment. I have a little swimming, but it will no doubt go off. There, I'm much better now. But what a figure you have made of my bonnet! If I had a glass, now! but it would be too much trouble to get one from the bathing machines. Oh yes, I shall do very well, if you'll just straighten the bonnet. That's it—that does very nicely. Thank you so much! Does the hair go pretty well? It looks so odd to have a crumpled bonnet, and one's hair all about. I

expect my old man here directly; I shall make him go and fetch a glass. Dear me! here he is! Well, lovey, I was just talking of you. Do you know, this gentleman and I have had a collision, as they say at sea. He was looking one way, I was looking another, when—whop we came against one another! Wasn't it funny? How you would have laughed!"

"I observed," said the other, very coldly, "that the gentleman was very assiduous in his attentions. It is not usual for strangers to arrange ladies' bonnets and dresses in public, therefore I conclude that some previous acquaintance has existed."

"Now he's jealous," said the lady, half aside to me. "Don't be jealous, lovey, there's nothing in it."

Here I thought it necessary to say, that I regretted having run against the lady by mere accident, while looking another way; that I could do no more than apologise, which I most sincerely did; and that I should not have

presumed to touch the lady's bonnet without being requested so to do.

The gentleman, without paying the least attention to me or my statement, again asked the lady how long the acquaintance had existed.

"Well, really," answered she, after giving me a meaning look, which I interpreted to mean, keep up the joke, "I really can't say to a day or a month; that would be telling, wouldn't it, Sir?"

After this, I thought it advisable to take my leave; but the gentleman, turning towards me for the first time—"Excuse me, Sir," said he, "perhaps you will wait till I find a card. And may I request the favour of your name and address?"

Having exchanged cards, his bearing the name "Major Briggs," I turned on my heel and left them, not a little disgusted with the impertinence of the woman and the folly of the man; but concluded that, after a little exercise

of the power of tormenting on the part of the former, matters would be explained and made up between them.

I had been seated in my room about an hour, when there came the single knock of heavy knuckles at the door; and to my cry of "Come in," there entered a somewhat rough-looking personage. He was a man rather below the middle height, and strongly put together: wore an old blue coat, rather white at the seams, shaped like an ordinary dress-coat, but bearing anchor buttons; a dirty yellow waistcoat, also with anchor buttons, that looked as if pea-soup had been spilt upon it, and imperfectly wiped up; blue trowsers, very tight over the hips, and scarcely coming up to meet the waistcoat; white stockings not over-clean, and very low-quartered pumps, with silver buckles in them. His face was seamed into ridges with the small-pox, and burnt and weather-beaten in the extreme, while his hair was bleached into

whity-brown by the sun; and he had a restless grey eye, constantly wandering, but looking nowhere. He came in with a shambling roll, nodding to nothing in particular; and having taken the chair I offered him, which was opposite the window, placed his large, hard hands upon his knees, tilted forward the chair, and looked vaguely up and down the street.

Here a rather long pause ensued, my curiosity being stimulated to know what would come from such a strange visitor. As he did not seem inclined to begin, but craned anxiously about, as if he expected a mouthpiece to help him from below, I thought it would be but civil to break the pause, so remarked that it was a fine day.

"No," said my strange friend, "getting dirty. Brewing to win'ward. Come up with the flood."

And here another long pause ensued. Having so summarily disposed of the weather,

I hardly knew what subject to try him with next. Still something must be said; so, at last, I suggested that perhaps he might have some business with me.

"Yes. Come from brother—Major. Pulled woman about. Brother don't like. Name friend — arrange meeting. Bang! bang! Soon settle—card." Whereupon he took from his soup-stained vest a piece of soiled pasteboard, and threw it on the table. I told him I should certainly look out for somebody to make arrangements on my part, upon which he rose to go, saying: "'Old Ship.' Sharp's the word. Stop at home—friend call."

And so, nodding to the furniture generally, left the room. His card was inscribed, apparently with a skewer dipped in a blacking-bottle:

T. BRIGGS, LIEUT., R.N.

I perceived that a scrape impended, but could hardly bring myself to think that a reasonable creature might not be mollified by some apology not humiliating to me to make. It was, nevertheless, necessary to take some steps, as my sententious friend had issued his dictum of "sharp's the word." I knew the surgeon would be at the hospital, so went there first. I found him labouring in his vocation; bantering as well as bandaging his patients, tossing off the cases in his usual off-hand style, joking, encouraging, telling anecdotes; in fact, making his daily visit rather one of amusement than of terror.

"Ah! you're just the fellow I want—we're rather heavy to-day. Just cauk me that lumber abscess, old fellow; and then look at that foot—I want to save that. Here's a pretty case, now; sinusses running about like a rabbit-warren. Must let the daylight in here, eh?" so saying, he laid open about an

inch and a half of one of them. "Good tough leather you've got, John. Why you didn't feel that, did you?"

Interrupting him before he began a new case, I told him I had something of importance to tell, if he would come into the surgery for five minutes.

"Oh, ho!" said the doctor. "Ah, ha! bet you a pound there's a woman at the bottom of it. You're in a nice mess," continued he, when I had briefly told my story. "And so you've fallen in with Bella Briggs! as if you couldn't have left her alone, of all the people in Brighton. You'll have to go out, my precious silly friend, you will indeed. Briggs is too jealous, and too great an ass to listen to reason. This is the third or fourth time he has had people out about that Jezebel, instead of having her out—of doors, as she richly deserves. More fools they for going, I think. You are come to ask me to do the needful; but it won't do.

No go! I've made a rule. If people could have a second and a surgeon in one, 'twould be handy, wouldn't it? I go in neither way: except with you, of course—any of our fellows —I shall be ready to do you up, if anything happens. You'd better go to Hall; he'll do it for you: and if any man can get you out of it, he will. He'll laugh at you a bit, I dare say. Well, I must go on with my work. Let me know at mess time. And tell Hall not to walk us half over the Downs; a hundred yards beyond the houses is as good as a mile. I don't want to walk half-way to Lewes before breakfast."

So I went to Captain Hall and told him all about it.

"Well, really," said Captain Hall, continuously nodding his head, and raising his eyebrows, "I did think that you were a discreet young man; but upon my word, the world is come to such a pass now, that one hardly knows what one's friends may turn

out. So steady as you appeared to be! and I should have thought too sensible to take up with Bella Briggs. I must say that you chose a remarkably quiet place for the meeting. Such a sequestered nook as the East Cliff is on a bright summer morning, quite a sylvan scene!

"'Let me wander, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, through hillocks green.'

Perhaps you meant that. I shall call it Lovers' Lane in future."

"But, my dear Sir," said I, as soon as I could get in a word, "it was accidental entirely. I ran against her while I was looking another way."

"Oh, of course it was an accident, and accidents will happen in the best regulated families. It might do as a 'shocking accident' for the newspapers. 'Yesterday morning, as a lady and gentleman were walking by mutual appointment on the East Cliff at Brighton,

so intensely dazzling were the rays of the sun, that they came into violent collision before they were aware of each other's presence. We may adduce this as another instance of the extraordinary mildness of the season.'"

"Well, if you don't believe me I can't help it."

"My dear friend, take me with you. I most implicitly believe in the collision—entirely—I never doubted that. Though I declare the world is come to such a pass, that one hardly knows what to believe. I had as soon believe you as any beneficed clergyman, if not rather; but you know what these Brighton people are? Now, take any twelve men out of the most virtuous street in Brighton — say Middle Street, which is more of a secluded vale than any other — take twelve men out of that, and tell them that a gentleman under fifty was seen setting Bella Briggs' bonnet right, and arranging her curls and making her shawl go becomingly,

and that no further intimacy existed between such gentleman and Bella Briggs; and moreover that they, as good men and true, were further called upon to believe that said gentleman never saw Bella Briggs before, and never meant to see her again; now, how many of the virtuous Middle Street men do you think would believe it? Would there be one credulous man in the twelve? Would there be ten in the town? Very well to say that you took upon yourself those attentions extempore. You probably said: 'Come to my arms, my slight acquaintance!' but you see the world is really got to such a pass, that you can't persuade people to believe anything in the extra-virtuous line—you can't indeed. I deplore it; but nevertheless I'll do what I can for you; so go home, and I'll call as soon as I've seen this precious fellow at the 'Ship.'"

In half an hour he called upon me, and sat down, wiping his forehead.

"Now, my dear friend," said Captain Hall, "when you next have a collision, or get into any other scrape in that shady lane by the Crescent, and come to me to set you right, let it be distinctly understood that I won't meddle with it unless I am to deal with human creatures: or if I must go to an animal, let it be anything but a grisly bear. An ourang-outang, at all accustomed to society, I shouldn't mind; but I can make nothing of this fellow: so we must go. Six o'clock on the Downs. Take the third tall street on the right off the level at half-past five, and we shall hit them off."

In spite of my friend's banter, I could see that he was hurt and grieved that he could do nothing o get me off so very foolish a business; but in those days an untried man who backed out of such a thing had a stain cast upon him for life, which it required more than ordinary human fortitude to incur.

Punctually at half-past five we steered our

course up the tall street towards the Downs, and found the doctor seated on the wall at the top.

"Now, I'll tell you what," said the doctor; "shoot this fellow! Put down this nonsense. Men are not to be brought up here in the grey of the morning for such a Jezebel as Bella Briggs. It won't do. I don't mean to recommend you to hit him in the trunk —no occasion to touch his trunk, unless you like it; but smash his knees—bowl it through his thighs, or into his ancle-box. Splinter him there, and you'll make him limp for life."

And here he instructed me how to bring up the pistol quickly by bending the elbow-joint only, and keeping the eye fixed on the part intended to be hit.

Early as we were, the other party were before us. The lieutenant had taken the bearings of the sun, and regulated our places accordingly.

"Sun east and by north. Stand north and by west, south and by east. Twelve paces. Drop hat. Blaze away."

I raised my pistol very quickly at the signal, to baulk him, which it did, though his ball whistled close above my right ear. I then fired in the air.

In the course of the same morning, a three-cornered note was delivered to me: it ran as follows:

"Dear Sir,

"I am so truly concerned to hear of the trouble I have caused you, that I cannot rest till I have expressed my most sincere regret. Pray call upon me some time during the day.

"Isabella B.

"P.S.—Perhaps the best time to call would be between seven and eight this evening, as Major B. dines out, and probably you would not wish to see him so soon after what has occurred."

I had not the most distant intention of affording the distressed lady any opportunity of apologising. At first my impulse was to return the note; but this would have been rude, so I took a little time to consider. While engaged in this process, a knock of heavy knuckles came upon the door; and to my very great surprise, my sententious friend, the Lieut. R.N., presented himself. He made the same general nod to the furniture, took the same chair opposite the window, tilted it forwards as before, and directed his looks vaguely upon the passengers in the street below. Knowing my man, I came at once to the point, and requested to know what had procured me the pleasure of a second visit.

"Come from brother—major. Woman sent letter. Boy watched—correspondence. Brother don't like. Name friend — arrange meeting. Bang! bang! Soon settle. 'Old Ship. Wait at home—friend call."

I was in a towering passion.

"Very well, Sir," I said, "I shall attend. Tell him this. Bespeak coffin—make will—kingdom come;" and so I dismissed him.

I sought my friend Hall again.

"Now go home, and I'll soon settle this."

He laid the whole case before the commanding officer, who first placed me in close arrest; and then went to the general, who did the same for the major, with the intimation that he should prefer charges against him, if he did not send in his resignation immediately. This, after a little hesitation, was done; and although not acted upon, was kept as a guarantee for his good behaviour in future. And so ended my adventure with Bella Briggs.

Shortly after, the Crescent School broke up for the holidays, and the lady of the eyes and teeth departed. That I survived it, is evident from these pages. Dark thoughts of a watery grave I remember haunted me; but

the summer just then setting in with its usual severity, I thought it best to wait till the holidays were over, or at least till the dog-days came.

About this time, I received an invitation from my noble patron, the Duke, to spend a few days at his princely country residence, in company with two other officers of the regiment. There we spent an extremely happy week. His Grace was pleased to be extremely facetious about my misadventure, affecting to believe that my intimacy with the lady was still going on; and when a letter did reach me, he delivered it himself with much solemn mystery. It is not the least of the advantages of those in high position that their jokes are sure to tell; and that, what in others would pass for dulness, in them is recognised as wit. The Duke was, nevertheless, extremely civil; and at his table I met more than one celebrated character: especially I was interested in Thomas Moore, the poet,

and that prince of convivial song-writers, Captain Morris. Both these gentlemen sang, and, as far as I remember, accompanied themselves on the piano; and I thought at the time, and still think, that more genuine feeling was thrown into the words they uttered when singing their own compositions, than I have ever heard from other lips, even with the advantage of better voices. Especially was I delighted with that charming composition:

"When first I met thee, warm and young,"

and was not a little disappointed—not to say disgusted—in subsequent years, to find that it was wholly political; the faithless one being George IV., and his perfidy the abandonment of the Whigs!

At the end of the week, the Duke asked me to remain, requesting as a favour that I would help him in his correspondence, the young clergyman who then resided with him

being absent. This I was only too happy to do. I then, for the first time, became aware that property has its duties as well as its rights, though the phrase was not then current. The number of letters he received daily was astonishing, and upon all subjects: political, personal, electioneering, literary, and business connected with his widely extended property; the purchase and sale of estates, the petitions of tenants, applications for farms, livings and situations of various kinds; the contests of counties and boroughs, which, indeed, was the most exciting of all subjects, a favourite saying of his being, that the greatest enjoyment he knew would be to contest a county and win by a single vote; the begging-letters disclosed every form of misery and ruin—utterly destitute gentlemen and ladies, unnumbered orphans and widows, who, without any figure of speech, were literally reduced to their last shift. Some he answered with his own hand, some he left to the agent,

others with "Ay," or "No" written on them, were handed across the table for me to reply to by the Duke's request. Three or four hours were usually spent in this way.

His Grace soon discovered my addiction to graphiology, and amused himself by submitting to me the letters of his correspondents, concealing only the names, and requiring the character to be endorsed upon each. Judging by the hearty laughter with which he read the remarks, I presume they were not without point. With one, more especially, he was greatly pleased. I described him as a clever rascal; a vulgar fellow, with some varnish of a gentleman. This, I subsequently discovered, was his own valet.

One morning, the Duke communicated to me the pleasing fact that I was promoted to a lieutenancy, handing me at the same time a letter from the lieutenant-colonel of the regiment to himself, to say that volunteers were required, and would be drafted to such

regiments as they thought proper to select; those choosing regiments in Spain were to be marched at once to Portsmouth, where a transport was waiting to convey them to either Bilboa or Passages, to join Lord Wellington's army. Here was the opportunity I had so much longed for: the Duke said he was going to Brighton—Brighthelmstone, he always called it—and offered me a seat in his carriage.

A pleasant thing it is to travel with a well-known man of high position: you yourself seem to shine with a mild and gratifying reflected light from the larger luminary. What alacrity of waiters, and bowing of obsequious landlords!—what profound respect from the little crowds assembled at the changing of the posters!—and what benignant smiles are called up into all the pretty faces—and even the plain ones—that watch you from the windows! Even the face of nature seems more charming as you fly through the sunny meads; the

dreariest village puts on its holiday looks till you have passed it; and the turnpike-man throws open his gate as if John Gilpin himself were upon the road, almost ashamed to stop you for the trifle of change that is due to him.

Arrived at Brighton, I lost no time in consulting the colour-serjeant of the company I belonged to, touching the temper of the men in regard to volunteering, and how they felt disposed towards the regiment I had in view. The serjeant, a wary old soldier, long on the recruiting service, undertook to sound them, and came back with a long face, and the information that there were too many Irish in that regiment to render it popular. Still, he thought it possible to do something: the omnipotent force of pots of beer might create a diversion, and suggested that a few pounds judiciously invested in stout, under his immediate management, would very probably do wonders. This was at once put in practice,

and day after day I was called upon for fresh supplies, while the serjeant and his immediate friends continued in a state of very questionable sobriety, yet not a man came forward. I thought it advisable to take more direct measures, so assembled the company in the barrack-room, and made a short speech, which, if brevity be the soul of wit, might be said to possess much of that quality. I said: "My regiment is so and so. Whoever goes with me I shall consider entitled to a small present—not as a bribe, far from it, but for luck—we must drink our own healths. To the fifty men I require I shall give each a pound, to be paid immediately after the volunteering, in my room."

The report of my eloquence soon spread; and, before evening, I had the names of fifty men, and some over, sent into me, who of course received the gratuity. An ensign tried the same system with thirty, and with equal success.

His Grace took the chair at our last dinner with the corps, looking a curious figure, in a short jacket and white tights. Never was there a better president of a convivial meeting. His tact was perfect. He had the art of keeping the conversation general, without flagging or dulness. He encouraged singing, and brought out every man's leading qualities in a way to gratify himself and others. If any little tiffs occurred—no uncommon thing when men drank hard, and sat at it half the night—he led them back to good humour by the magic of his manners; and though he drank hard, and was surrounded by those who showed that they had done so too, he never for a moment lost his dignity, or his perfect command over the company.

Just before leaving Brighton, I saw two rather strange feats performed by a Captain Bridges, for a wager. One was, his riding down the Devil's Dyke, a place now well enough known, though then rarely visited,

except accidentally, when the hounds happened to run that way. It is a formidable feat, though more so perhaps in appearance than reality. He gallantly charged the very centre of the slope, and went down at a sort of gliding, scrambling pace, impossible to describe, but fast, and keeping the horse's head straight downwards. Any deviation from the direct line would have sent man and horse rolling to the bottom.

About a quarter of the way down, there is a sort of ridge across, after which the descent becomes even more steep than at first; and this was the trying place. For a moment he was hidden behind the small rise, but immediately after was seen scrambling, in a cloud of chalk dust, to the bottom.

The other feat was by the same performer. At that time the East Cliff had not been faced with stone, and was continually falling away in large masses, curtailing the breadth of the road, and even threatening to absorb it

altogether. Along the top ran an irregular post and rail fence, in some places close upon the edge where the chalk had fallen, in others having a space of a few feet between it and the precipice. In one of the broadest of these spaces, not, I should think, more than seven feet, Captain Bridges undertook to ride over the palings, turn his horse, and leap back again. Now, in almost every part of the cliff, the top somewhat overhung the under part; and, independent of the danger arising from the horse not being able to stop himself in the limited space between the rail and the cliff, there was the danger of his weight and the concussion bringing down the ground he jumped upon. The captain rode at a walk up to the railings, and let the horse—a well-trained old hunter, famous at standing leaps—look over, and reconnoitre the ground, then gently lifted his head, as much as to say, "If I put you at that, do you think you can manage it?" As the horse showed no symptom of

fear, he lifted him again, gently touched him with the spur, and over he went. When the horse had gathered himself upon the other side, his fore-feet were within a foot of the precipice, down which he looked, snorting. It was a comparatively easy matter to turn, and leap him back again.

It was a sorrowful event to many when we marched out of Brighton—the band preceding us with the accustomed air, "The girl I left behind me." It was at the witching hour of the morning when the cooks and housemaids have the whole town to themselves. The balconies, the windows, the areas, were alive with abandoned Didos. How many a kiss was waved by a dust-pan! how many a sigh wafted by a duster! Old rags and scraps of flannel were invested with unexpected pathos. The mop, intended for the area steps, seemed more adapted to dry the cheeks of her who held it; and besoms and brooms came out in the

serious line with a force never before seen in their performances.

I halted the men outside the town to wipe their eyes—an event, I believe, unparalleled in military history. I also established a rear-guard to take charge of such as, from excessive grief, were unable to keep their places in the column. So intense were the feelings of several, that their powers wholly failed them, and they lay down by the roadside, to be brought on by small parties I was obliged to leave behind for that purpose. The rear-guard system I was also fain to modify, fearing that by a too rigid exercise of discipline we might march the whole detachment into Worthing prisoners.

The next day we marched to Chichester in somewhat better order than had characterized our proceedings the first day. And here a slight adventure befel, with an account of which I will detain the reader.

Associated with me in this expedition was a gentleman some years older than myself, though at a lower grade of rank. He was the son of a gentleman farmer, to gratify whom, and secure his interest in a neighbouring borough, his son was given a commission in the regiment. Roger Strong was an upright, good fellow, but of a literal, quaint simplicity that was amusing. He had not the faintest conception of a joke, and anything advanced with a grave face and earnestness of manner, seldom failed to find credence with him. Without being a selfish man, he had a way of looking after his own interests, and thinking of himself before others, which, open and undisguised as it was, was an additional proof of his simplicity of character. When any doubt arose in his mind, or any proposition came suddenly upon him, he was in the habit of asking, partly of himself and partly of any one near him: "Do you think it would conduce to my advantage?" and this whether

relating to the most serious matter, or an extra glass of wine, or additional slice of mutton.

Having dismissed the men to their billets and changed our dress, we sallied forth, as is usual, to make some acquaintance with the town and its neighbourhood. Among other objects of interest, our attention was arrested by two rather fine and showy young ladies, who appeared to have no more definite object than ourselves, for we met them again and again in all the principal streets of the place, till we seemed at last almost acquainted with them.

My friend Strong was much struck with the elder of the two, whom he declared to be exactly the kind of girl he had been so long looking for, and if he ever did marry, his wife should be something like that. By some accident as we strolled slowly out towards the suburbs, the two ladies passed us, and just at the town's end opened a small, neat, green

gate leading to a comfortable-looking "cottage of gentility," into which, after a little coquetting with the shrubs and flowers, they entered. We passed the house, and on the return, two faces in bonnets appeared dimly at one of the upper windows, with some indications of there being others in the background. My friend, with a degree of desperation I have rarely known him to be guilty of, turned when we had nearly passed, and hoisted a kiss at them with his clumsy arm. Having achieved this feat, he seemed more easy in his mind, and especially as there was a momentary white glance behind the sash, which might as well be referred to a returning salute as anything else.

"I begin to think," said my friend, after another long pause, "that the poet says truly, 'Marriage alone is happiness below.' I wish I was going to settle in a cottage with that sweet girl; but the cottage now, you know, would be

out of the question, and there's so little time to do anything—"

"My dear fellow, how can you say that, haven't you the whole evening? Things are permitted on a march which no one would dream of at other times. Once introduced, the thing might be easily managed. You may just as well say, 'Will you allow me the pleasure of marrying you? as 'It's a fine day;' or 'Have you been very gay lately?' indeed I think it a much more correct inquiry than the latter."

"How nice it would be to be sitting opposite and looking at her all the evening!"

"Delicious! and think how careful she would be of your linen."

"By the bye, I never thought of that. I have not had a button on anything for months; obliged to tie my things up with strings: it takes me half an hour extra to dress and undress."

"The inevitable fate of bachelors. But if you really think of it, you must lose no time. Indeed you could not get married out there, I give you no hope of that. Most likely we shall embark at once, and no time to get a licence, still less to have the banns put up. But once on board, the captain can marry you without ceremony—or rather with the usual ceremony—performed in sea fashion."

"But do you really think it would conduce to my advantage?"

"Not a doubt of it! Consider what a thing it will be to have your buttons all right in Spain. Why, a general action might be half over before you had tied yourself up. Then she would get you something comfortable for dinner after the march, and warm your nightcap, and pay all sorts of kind attentions. It is true you and I will only be allowed a mule between us for the baggage, but I have no doubt she could find room upon him some-

where; we must only look out for a long-backed one."

"Well, would not you like to take the other?"

"That comes suddenly upon me. I must think of it. At any rate, there is no harm in warning her. They ought to know to-night, because their things may be at the wash."

We dined early, and after dinner my companion withdrew. Tired with the day's march, I threw myself into an easy chair and fell asleep. I probably remained in this state of oblivion for several hours, and was at last roused by the entrance of my friend Strong in a state of—for him—great excitement.

"I've been and seen them, Marianne and Lizzy: they'll be all ready. I said all I could for you. She's the sweetest girl—no nonsense—and Lizzy's very nice. What happy fellows we shall be!"

"And who the deuce are Marianne and Lizzy? What's the matter?"

"Why our intendeds, to be sure — those dear girls at the cottage with the green gate. They are most respectable people. Weggs is a man of some independent property."

"Weggs! Do you mean to say you have taken up with Lizzy Weggs?"

"No, no. Marianne's mine — Lizzy's yours."

"Oh! Lizzy Weggs is mine, is she?"

"Lizzy Weggs is yours. I'll tell you how it happened. It was the most fortunate thing in the world that I went out when I did, or I should have missed Maria."

"What! have you bespoke three of them?"

"No; Maria's the maid—a most respectable young woman for her situation in life. Well, Sir, I went straight to the house, of course, and walked up and down before it some time. I could not see anybody, but

heard a great many voices inside, and I thought what a cheerful family they must be. At last the side door opened, and who should come out but the servant maid. She came through the green gate, and went towards the town. Well, thinks I, this is a chance, so I stepped out and soon overtook her.

"'It's a fine evening, Miss,' said I. I did not like to say my dear, because I saw she was a superior young woman, and might think it free.

"'Yes, Sir,' says she, 'it is indeed a very fine evening; smells quite fresh after the rain.'

"'I suppose you are going to take a walk in the town?' says I.

"'Not very far, Sir; only to Morris, the grocer's, for half a pound of treacle; this is head-night, and they always has bread and treacle head-nights. To-morrow's foot-night, but that don't make no difference, they gets nothing extra then. And then I'm going to

call at Wizen, the chemist's, for a black dose for Mary—poor thing, she haven't been right in her bowels for two or three days.'

"'Are they all little ones,' says I.

"'Oh dear no, Sir; there's four growed up, or as good as growed up! Marianne's twenty.'

"'I saw two of them to-day,' says I; 'and sweet girls they were.'

"'You may justly say that, Sir,' says she, 'that's Marianne and Lizzy—they are treasures, they are. Marianne's my favourite, she's so tidy; oh, Marianne's so tidy! Why, when she takes off a thing, it's as clean as what other people puts on. She can wear a collar a week, and not the sign of a soil upon it. I'll be bound, if you was to see her of a Saturday evening, you'd say: "Lord, Miss Marianne, you've been and put on a clean collar!" But Lizzy's very pretty! oh, Lizzy's very pretty! She's nineteen, she is.'

"'Well,' says I, 'my friend and I are very

much in love with Miss Marianne and Miss Lizzy; and we should be very happy to marry them, only the time's so short.'

"'Well, now, my dream's out, as sure as I'm alive! It was only this very morning I was a saying to the cook, says I, "Cook, what do you think I've been a-dreaming about?"—"How should I know?" says she.—"Why, I've been a-dreaming that two young trees came and planted themselves right against our fore-door; and they was covered with the beautifullest birds, all gold and silver, and red and blue; and they was a-shaking of their wings, and singing the beautifullest you ever heard; and," says I, "cook, you mark me if there ain't a marriage in this family before long."—"Ah," says cook, "that'll be me, if Scrattle takes the public-house, and do as he've promised to do."—But here's Wizen's, I'll just step in for the draught; and go round back by Morris's.'

"Well, Sir, when Maria came out we went round and got the treacle; and,' says I, 'Now Maria, tell me all about the family, and what sort of people they are, and everything.'

"'Well, Sir,' says she, 'the next to Lizzy 's Jemima—she's eighteen; we calls her cold Jemima, she's so solid; she ain't one of your flaunting ones; they puts upon her—she's so quiet; but a better one for mending and making, you never see: Jemima's a nice girl! oh, Jemima's a nice girl! Then Margaret's the next; steady Peg they calls her, because she's always a-thinking; she's seventeen, she is; she don't do so much as Jemima, because she's always a-thinking—think, think, think; think, think, think—never see such a girl for thinking: but Margaret's a sweet girl! oh, Margaret's a sweet girl! Then, there's Mary, poor thing, she's weakly; but Mary's a good girl! oh, Mary's a good girl! she ain't justly sixteen.

Then there's five boys; and after them comes Ethelfridda.'"

"Ethel—who?"

"Fridda—freeda, is it? That's a Saxon name, Maria says. Weggs's family, they say, were living in the time of the Saxons; that's something. The other six are little ones; the two youngest are twins; and Mrs. Weggs is large in the family way. Well, Sir, when I got back to the green gate, I seemed to know as much of the Weggses as if I had been acquainted with them all my life; one does get intimate with some people sooner than others; so I gave Maria half-a-crown, and desired her to present my compliments to Marianne and Lizzy, and I should feel obliged by a short interview. But I had to wait a long time—I should think near an hour. At last Maria comes out, and says she: 'Lord! you can't think what difficulty I had to get them down; they're in the back garden

now; so you go, and get over the gate out of the lane—there's spikes at the top, so mind you don't sit down—and go right into the garden, and say you've seen a suspicious character a-prowling about, and you're afraid he's going to rob the garden, and you're come to caution them. Then they can't do no less than thank you; and then you can talk about thieves, and murders, and such like, and how necessary it is to have a man in the house; and that leads you to husbands, you see.'

"Well, Sir, I was so much pleased with Maria, that I gave her another half-crown and a kiss, and she said if Mrs. Weggs knew it, it would be as much as her place was worth. You see they are very respectable people. So I went round to the gate; but, Lord! it was as high as my head, and all smooth planks, and not a notch in them anywhere to put one's foot in, and sharp spikes at the top; and how the deuce to get over I didn't know, but, thinks I, 'love

laughs at locksmiths,' and perhaps at carpenters and blacksmiths too; so I took a run at it, and hoisted myself up, and got my feet up, and slewed them over; but somehow before I got them over my foot slipped, and down I went on the spikes, but I made a great effort, and got off somehow; but the tail of my coat hung to the spikes, and when I got down I was partly hanging by the tails, with the coat stripped up to my armpits. Well, Sir, the dear girls were just passing at the moment, and I was in a most awkward state to address them for the first time, but I apologised for the intrusion, and talked about the thieves, all the while trying to rip out the spike from my skirt; but it had got through the pocket, and all I could do I couldn't get free: so the ladies laughed very much, and couldn't lift it off for laughing, they're such cheerful girls; but at last Maria came and pulled me off the spike. And such a delightful walk I had with yours and mine, one on each arm. I said

all I could: how desperately you were in love with Lizzy, and I felt that she was blushing; but they've both promised to be ready at five, boxes packed and all, at the garden gate."

"The devil they have!"

"Honour bright! Maria's going to sit up all night to iron their things; and Jemima's hard at work at the stockings."

"This is an adventure indeed. Let me see, you are to have Marianne; I'm to take Lizzy; and who is to have Maria?"

"Well, I didn't know what to propose about Maria: you know we only agreed to take the two."

"Now, I'll tell you what I should propose, as we are dealing rather largely in Weggses, to take the whole four grown-up ones, and Maria and Mrs. Weggs too; the cook we'll leave to Scrattle, besides Weggs himself will require somebody. Cold Jemima is sure to get a husband in a warm climate; and having so large a family we shall require somebody to

think for us, so steady Peg will be just the thing. We can put her into a closet by herself, and there she can think, think, think; think, think, think for the whole party, and save us a deal of trouble. Then Maria's sure to marry; at any rate, she'll wash and iron our things. With respect to Mrs. Weggs there may be a difficulty. She can't marry till she gets abroad, that's certain; but consider what a relief it will be to Weggs. She has already brought him,—how many is it? seventeen children, the two last twins, and is now large in the family way. There is no knowing now how far she may go. I remember once, down in Worcestershire, seeing four at a birth, and splendid babies they were. Just suppose Mrs. Weggs going upon the same system—habit grows upon people—why, in ten years she may have forty more! Fifty-seven, say sixty in round numbers, sitting down to dinner every day. At ten to a leg of mutton, that would be six legs of mutton daily; and think of the

treacle on head-nights; the black doses; the stockings for cold Jemima to mend. It would puzzle steady Peg to think how they were to get through it. It would really be a charity to break up this family at once. With a general servant and his Saxon energy, Weggs would do well enough with the trifle of children left him—only thirteen, I think—and he would know the worst. It would be saving the poor man from absolute ruin. Besides, it would immortalize us. We should live in history. What a theme for the penny-a-liner! 'Wholesale abduction! Our town was on Saturday last the scene of one of the most audacious outrages ever perpetrated among civilized people,' and so on. Then you see Weggs on his desolate hearth, his hopes blighted, his happiness withered, surrounded by wailing infancy and querulous disease (for Mary is still actively suffering from the draught), 'and who are the miscreants who have perpetrated this unparalleled crime? Why, the mis-called defenders of the country, the wretches we are

taxed to feed; whose passions are pampered by the sweat of our brow,' &c. &c. &c. Why, my dear friend, if Marianne and Lizzy were to drop, we might marry anybody after this!"

"Then you think it would contribute to our advantage to take them all?"

"Decidedly. I would include Mary, but under the circumstances, perhaps it would be inconvenient. And it would hardly be fair to rob Scrattle of the cook: so we had better say, Mrs. Weggs, four daughters and Maria."

My friend Strong was rather discomposed at this addition to the party, fearing it might be attended with more expense than he calculated on, and so not conduce to his advantage; but I thought the feeling would be of very short duration, as at five the next morning he would discover the full extent of the hoax practised upon him by Maria and the two frolicsome girls, who, seeing into his character, had amused themselves with his credulity as I had. I therefore went to bed, rather grate-

ful to the Weggs family for a hearty laugh, and never expecting to hear of them again, except from the disappointed Strong, as long as I lived.

The assembly sounded at half-past four, and it was barely five when we approached the seat of the Weggses. I had restrained my friend in the matter of hiring a chaise, telling him that as women were reputed changeable, it would be better not to go to that expense unless in the certainty that they were ready to come. In this, as it contributed to his advantage, he acquiesced.

Notwithstanding my disbelief, I could not approach the cottage with the green gate, without some vague feeling of anxiety. I rather expected to find all the girls up, and grinning faces, surmounted by frilled night-caps, peeping at us from behind the window-curtains. What then was my surprise—almost horror—to see the two girls we had followed fully dressed by the gate, two boxes

packed, and Maria—I presumed—waiting ready to help in any way, or even to come along herself.

I had only time to take Strong aside, and tell him to put them off somehow; to say that circumstances had arisen to render it impossible to ask them to accompany him; to hold out any hopes he liked; to break down all the chaises, and lame all the horses in Chichester, but on no account to bring the girls; as I had found out that it would not, just then, at all contribute to his advantage. I then hid myself on the reverse flank of the column, and left my friend to his fate.

Hurrying on, I never ventured to look behind me, fearing to see our earnest friend with one box on his shoulder and another in his hand, and accompanied by the amiable Miss Weggses, and the indefatigable Maria.

At the breakfast-place where we halted, he came up sadly crest-fallen, and strangely taciturn. What he said or did, I was not too

curious to inquire; but I feared that in spite of his simplicity, I was somehow looked upon as a traitor.

Arriving at Portsmouth, we found the transport waiting for orders from the Admiralty. St. Sebastian had not yet fallen, or was not known to have fallen, and the French army was supposed still to have possession of Passages, whither we were bound. While this suspense continued, we were crossed over to Gosport, and put into barracks. Transports arrived daily, some filled with troops; and it was evident that a considerable reinforcement was intended for Lord Wellington's army.

CHAPTER IV.

EMBARK FOR SPAIN.

On the 29th of September, we embarked about three hundred men in a transport of as many tons; and after a rather rough passage, arrived off the coast of Spain on the 5th of October.

It is impossible to conceive the interest excited by the view of that stupendous coast. This would have been great, from the natural features of the country, after the tame and prosaic shores of England—how much more

so, invested with ancient romance, and now a romance in action before our eyes. The coast rises like a wall of iron abruptly from the deep blue sea, and stretches backward into range above range of lofty mountains. On our right was the fortress of St. Sebastian, newly fallen, after a siege heroic on the part of the assailants and of the besieged; and the scene of more than the ordinary horrors of an assault. On the left was Fontarabia,

"Where Charlemagne with all his peerage fell,"

and on the mountains immediately above these lay two mighty armies, face to face, composed of stern, well-tried veterans, and commanded by chiefs worthy of each other; and into the deadly strife between them we were about to be hurled. I said that the coast rises like an iron wall; but a narrow gap in it, like a lock, admitted us into the harbour of Passages.

The place was so full of vessels, that we

could hardly find a berth—store-ships, transports, men-of-war, and coasting vessels innumerable. The town was absolutely choked with British troops, most of them sick or wounded; commissaries with armies of mules, followers of the army of both sexes and almost every grade, who had been driven out of the mountains, and now thronged as close to the skirts of the army as possible.

We remained on board the transport till orders arrived from head-quarters; meantime it was a melancholy thing to perambulate the town —not, however, without its complementary colouring of the ridiculous. Every house seemed full of wounded men, and those who could crawl out sat maimed and bandaged against walls; while the hundreds of pale, anxious faces, looking from the windows, and wearing the peculiar expression which sharp agony gives, presented a shocking picture. Among them went about hard-featured, ferocious-looking women, both Spanish and Eng-

lish, joking, swearing, and mocking at the sufferers, while nevertheless they attended to them after their rough fashion.

There was also a considerable depôt of French prisoners occupying a large building and enclosed yard. The English sentry at the gate had been wounded in the head, and wore a handkerchief tied round his forehead, above which a forage-cap was lightly placed. As we passed, the field-officer of the day was seen on his rounds, and the guard turned out. There was scarcely a man of them that was not wounded in some way, and they came limping and shuffling out as they could. The subaltern of the guard, a man of fifty, sat quietly on a bench till the men had fallen in, and then with four brisk hops took his post in front, and presented arms. The field-officer was an elderly man, of a quaint and pawky expression. In a broad Scotch accent, he desired the officer to turn in his guard; and added, in a commendatory strain:

"Ye turned out vera quickly, conseedering yer limbs."

My friend Strong and myself lost no time in securing a sturdy mule to carry our joint baggage, and also hired an intelligent lad to take care of the same. This youth spoke a mixture of languages, from which it was difficult to pick out any genuine words from his miscellaneous store; but we managed to make him out, and found him, during the subsequent operations, a valuable servant.

Early on the 6th we marched out, a column of about four hundred men, escorting a long train of ammunition and stores, and took the road towards the mountains by Renterie. We soon fell in with the left of the allied army. The first was a Spanish regiment, hardy-looking fellows, very ragged, but their arms were bright, and they were of a square and serviceable build, which argued a vast capacity for hard work and privation. There was, however, a furtive and felonious look

with them which one would not care to recognise in a lonely place with the odds on their side. The English regiments were in a sadly dilapidated plight: their clothes were threadbare and patched in every part, while the scarlet was stained to purple with hard service and exposure. The difference of expression in the faces of these old soldiers from that of our own men was very remarkable. With much of frank heartiness and boisterous good-humour, there was a stern and dangerous ferocity which told of familiarity with scenes of bloodshed, pitiless cruelty, and a relentless exercise of the evil passions.

Our regiment was in the 4th division, and we found it encamped on a lofty ridge of mountains, from whence to the right and left the tents spread in a waving line some miles in extent. On the hills opposite could plainly be seen moving masses of the enemy, working,

we were told, at the detached forts which secured their position.

Our volunteers were soon absorbed into the regiment we had chosen; we presented ourselves to the commanding officer, a bluff, sharp-spoken man, and almost before we could believe in the reality, found ourselves units in that great army, of which has been said, not without reason, that it could go anywhere and do anything.

There was much talk among the officers of an intended atack, but no certain details had as yet transpired. Towards evening the commanding officers were sent for to head-quarters, and guns began to move forward. A violent thunder-storm came on at night, during which the guns were got into position along the crest of the mountain, and there was no doubt that a general attack on the French lines was in contemplation for the next day.

We were under arms long before daylight, and it appeared were destined to support the light division, the fighting line being formed considerably in our front. The tents were left standing, which to us, the uninitiated, seemed a proof that nothing very serious was to be apprehended, and promised a return. This, however, was a feint.

The plan of attack, as it subsequently appeared, was to pass a heavy column across the very mouth of the Bidassoa river at low water, with a view of turning or threatening the right wing of the French, and while this part was enacting we remained silently under arms.

The night had been miserably wet and cold, and our tent having been blown down during the storm, Strong and myself were thoroughly wet through. By a little exercise of prudence we had, however, provided ourselves with a canteen full of brandy each, and filled our pockets with hard German sausages at Pas-

sages, so we contrived to get a short rough breakfast before the others were stirring.

That any man could stand for the first time in the immediate expectation of a great battle without apprehension, I hold to be impossible, but I can safely say there was no fear — in its real sense. The enormous masses of men that we knew to be with us, the confidence of all about us who were inured to such scenes, the trust in the great commander, and the *prestige* of victory, tended much to keep down any qualms we might otherwise have felt: and to the high and ennobling considerations above-mentioned, I, as a faithful historian, may perhaps be permitted to add another—I think we were somewhat indebted for our coolness to the sausages and brandy.

Anything is better than suspense, particularly accompanied by cold and wet. We longed to be at them.

About seven in the morning a rocket shot

up into the air in front of our left flank; it made a tiny pop in the air, and fell in a shower of stars. This was the signal that all had waited. The whole line of guns opened in a terrific roar from the height, and the troops of the centre and right rushed forward. Our point of attack was the Bayonette mountain, up which the assailants were swarming; while the Spaniards, on the extreme right, were pushing along the ridge, and up the ravines, to turn the left of the Grand Rhune. The attacking forces amounted to twenty thousand men, while as many more were held in reserve. From the ridge of the mountain, where our artillery continued to thunder upon the enemy, seven columns descended to the attack. Nor were the French slow to answer the fire: round-shot at first, then grape and cannister were poured in upon us. After a short but desperate conflict, the opposite ridge was carried, and the French retreated to the second. The ground, as we advanced, was plentifully

strown with dead and dying; many of our column had been knocked down as we crowned the hill; but no one thought of the fallen, or of anything but rushing on. By the gallantry of the 9th regiment mainly, the enemy were driven from the second ridge, and we remained masters of the field.

I refrain from entering into more minute details of these actions. The French attacked the next day, were repulsed; and on the day after we again forced their position, and drove them a step further off the mountains. It was the general opinion in the army that the French troops did not fight on this occasion with their usual spirit or obstinacy, and that the natural defences, and the forts they had been at such pains to throw up, ought to have been more vigorously defended.

We took up our position on the Echallar mountain, with the Bidassoa in the rear; and here the army remained about a month.

I cannot to this day forget the amazing exhilaration of this mountain air, and the vigorous health it seemed to confer upon every one. The hunger caused by it was absolutely terrific: you could hardly wait till the rations were cooked, and were almost as hungry after dinner as before. In the meantime, every officer was strictly kept to his post; so I had little opportunity to extend my excursions beyond the particular part of the mountain we occupied.

On the 10th of December was fought the battle of the Nivelle—probably the most splendid military pageant ever witnessed, as the whole army, fifty thousand strong, was seen at once, descending the grassy slope; while the British men-of-war were cannonading the fort at the mouth of the river, and two hundred pieces of artillery were thundering at one time. The actions were renewed again on the 11th, 12th, and 13th, always with advantage to us, when we may literally be said to

have put our feet into the French soil. In my life, I never saw such deep or tenacious clay. Men and horses sank to their knees, and the suction rendered it almost impossible to disengage your feet.

On moving to the attack on the 13th, a captain of our regiment was placed in a ludicrous predicament. He was a little fat man, most anxious and perspiring, was near-sighted and wore spectacles. He got fairly bogged in the clay, and when helped out, it was found that he had left one boot behind him. This was, of course, too important to be abandoned; and after diving elbow-deep into the clay, he recovered it. To put it on, filled with mud and grit, would not have been advisable even if the wet boot would have allowed of it, and his trowsers, which fitted close over the calf, had admitted of the operation. A moment he stopped, in an attempt to get the mud out; but, failing in that, rushed madly forward to recover his place in the column. Alas! mis-

fortunes never come single: he had no straps, and before he had attained his object, the other boot was drawn off likewise. He had no stockings, so that his feet were wholly unprotected. By dint of great exertion, he fished up boot No. 2, and hurried on with them both in his hand. The exertion had increased his natural tendency to perspiration, and this he had thoughtlessly endeavoured to remove with the muddy sleeve of his coat and hands, so that he was plastered with clay, through which fresh streams were forcing themselves down his nose and cheeks. In this extremity, we filed out of the lane, to take up a position in line; and the men being called to attention, he had to draw his sword. To have gone into action with bare feet, his face a mass of clay, spectacles dimmed by the same, a pair of boots in one hand, and a drawn sword in the other, would have been a state of singular embarrassment; when a happy thought struck him, of tying his boots tight round his waist with

his sash, and so leaving one hand free. We were engaged very severely for some time, the two lines firing into each other at pistol-shot distance; but in spite of the severity of the action, I am satisfied I saw a smile on some of the Frenchmen's faces, at our friend's ridiculous appearance.

We passed the river on a pontoon bridge, and had our fair share in the five days' fighting near St. Pierre; actions little known or considered, but important as having baffled the desperate attempts of Soult to regain a superiority, or, at all events, to cripple the invading army; and whose aggregate loss on both sides amounted to five or six general officers, and about eleven thousand men.

It was on this, our first descent into France, that a dreadful scene of plundering was enacted; it commenced with the Spanish troops, who added murder and ill-treatment to it; and it must be confessed, the system spread very generally through the army. As

respects the plundering only, there was really some excuse, for the Spaniards were positively half-starved; and under such circumstances, it is something too much to expect of ignorant human creatures, that they should see fat pigs and poultry round the house they occupy, and hares and sausages hanging over their heads, without appropriating some of the good things. The propensity, however, was repressed by severe examples; several men were shot, and some of the Spanish battalions sent home again.

Those who only know hunger as a pleasurable excitement to be agreeably relieved at dinner-time, have not the faintest conception of the wolf-like feeling of a second day's fast, or even of the effect of very scanty commons prolonged over several months in a bracing mountain air and plenty of exercise.

One thing a man was accused of having appropriated—not obliged by hunger, but request of friends—an eight-day clock; a move-

able not easy to conceal, supposing it of the ordinary height of about seven feet, and in a stout oaken case. Being demanded as to how he came into possession, and what he meant to do with it, he said it was just the thing his mother wanted; and she told him, if one ever fell in his way to bring it along with him. Now, considering the campaign was likely to be a protracted one, that he had no means of transit except his back, that the marches were incredibly long and heavy, and the roads deep in the extreme—this incident furnishes, perhaps, the strongest example of filial obedience ever adduced, an indomitable spirit of acquisition, and contempt of all ordinary difficulties.

The most extraordinary and lumbrous article I ever saw carried on a march on active service, was a violoncello; and it belonged to a man, who, from his professional avocations, might have been supposed the most unlikely to have such a thing—the adjutant.

Adjutants, generally speaking, are men of a peculiar turn of mind, and not exclusively devoted to the fine arts; their reading is not so much in the department of the *belles lettres*, as in that of warrants and regulations; and their writings take the line of the regimental manuscripts. There was some shrewdness of observation into character manifested by the young lady of a garrison town, who, commenting with the Army List in hand, upon the individuals she happened to know in a certain regiment, stopped her inquiring friend with this off-hand notice:

"Oh, you may guess what sort of a fellow he is; he's the adjutant."

But our adjutant was an exception; and so determined was he to have his big fiddle well up with the troops, that he kept a separate mule on purpose to carry it, and a separate boy to take care of that mule. This young fellow, who was a lazy Portuguese, and by no means fond of walking; when he could

contrive to remain out of sight of the column, was accustomed to mount the mule himself; and as there was not room for both himself and the fiddle, he held it upright before him, the lower part of the instrument resting on the front of the pack-saddle, his left hand extended up to the neck, and holding the bridle with his right. When he had occasion to urge his mule forward, his principal means of doing so, was by working the bridle and kicking; so that at a little distance he had the air of playing a rapid movement on the instrument, accompanied by strange contortions of extacy.

Our adjutant was a dear lover of Corelli's music; and in the trios of that master he was a proficient, giving out, with peculiar unction, the jerking triplets of the jigs, something like the movement of a lame man hopping up and down stairs. In all difficulties or embarrassments, sorrows or joys, he flew to his Corelli.

"Ah, my dear Sir," he would say, when practising in the first leisure moment after an action, "this ninth sonata has drawn tears from many an eye. Think of poor Jones, while I play you this. Doesn't it touch you?" Then he came to the quick movement, and repeated the words as a vocal accompaniment: "Doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't it touch; doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't it touch; doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't it, doesn't, &c."

One morning the commanding officer went into his tent and found him hard at work, and thoroughly rapt from all sublunary cares.

"I've just heard from England," said the chief, trying to make himself heard above the din "that Ensign Honeyman's coming to join."

This he immediately took up. "Ensign Honeyman's coming to join, Ensign Honeyman's coming to join—Honeyman, Honeyman, Honeyman, Honeyman, &c., &c."

Shortly before we crossed the Nive a young officer joined us, who was the most extraordinary example of a person without moral fear, and what was still more extraordinary, considering what he did, of personal fear also, that I ever saw. He was absolutely without the sense of shame, or indeed of feeling of any kind. When he found himself in action for the first time he stared about him, though without the slightest perturbation or dismay.

"I don't like this at all," said he. "This I think silly. I've a great mind to go and sit under that tree till you've done. I'll stand behind you, serjeant (to a man of gigantic size, who could have sheltered half a dozen). It can't make any difference to you, you know, my standing here; you would be just as likely to be hit if I was anywhere else. There, don't turn to speak to me, my good man, stand square to the front, and you are more likely to cover me."

The colonel was a man very particular in

having his officers exactly in their places, and would admit of no gossipping or getting into parties, still less of any flinching or malingering. In a momentary pause in the engagement, he rode down the front to see how the regiment had fared as to loss, and his quick eye soon missed the newly-come ensign.

"Ah!" said the colonel, "where's Mr. ——, is he down? A short career, indeed."

"No, no, colonel," replied our friend, peeping from behind the serjeant's elbow, "I'm not down, and don't mean to be if I can help it. I'm here behind the big serjeant. Positively, colonel, if I had known what sort of thing it was, I should never have come here; I should have gone on the sick-list. Once I get home again, you may catch me coming out again if you can. You're a lucky fellow to have a horse, but I should take special care never to mount him, because, you see, you are

unnecessarily exposed. I should make him a stalking-horse, and stand behind him."

One day when a man in his front was badly hit he said:

"Thank you, that's a good fellow; if you hadn't stopped that I should have had it. I'll give you a pot of beer some day if you recover, and I can get one."

The amusement he afforded the men was excessive; there was a roar whenever he opened his mouth. In those days there was a much greater distance between officers of different ranks than now. A subaltern generally said "Sir," to his captain, and for one of that grade to speak in a light or trivial way to the commanding officer, was looked upon with astonishment and dismay. But this he never could be made to understand or entertain for a moment, and the consequence was, that no man in that or any other army ever had such hard things said to him. The colonel, a hard, bitter old soldier, who had been brought up in

the strictest school, used to blow him up in his coarsest and wickedest manner, with about as much effect as if he had addressed himself to a brick wall, excepting that the ensign would have the last word. One day he "let out," as the phrase is, at him with peculiar severity; and when he had done, the other asked him if he didn't feel himself much relieved by that. "Rather rich, too, to damn a man's bones and gristle—that's something new, that is; never heard any one before go beyond eyes, or limbs, or blood: we shall have the skin and hair next time, I suppose."

He was a great explorer about the outposts, very inquisitive as to what was going on, and repeatedly fired at by the enemy's videttes and sentries. One day he distinguished himself, and established an extraordinary reputation. He fell in with two French dismounted dragoons, who were supposed to be out foraging; they intercepted him, and as they fancied, took him prisoner. He addressed them as they

came up, with a "How do you do? Hope you're quite well. Fine morning, is it not?—but cold. Have a drop of brandy?"

The Frenchmen very readily accepted the invitation, and they finished the small bottle very amicably. "And now," said the ensign, "I must wish you good-by. I've a particular engagement at eleven."

This, however, was very far from the Frenchmen's intention; and one of them drew his sabre, and insisted upon his coming along with them.

"I really can't do it, thank you," said the ensign; "some other time, perhaps I may; but just now, I'm particularly engaged."

By way of enforcing compliance, the dragoon gave him a slight poke in the ribs with the point of his sabre, enough to inflict a slight flesh wound; when, no doubt to the extreme surprise of himself and comrade, the prisoner suddenly drew his sword, and passed it through the man's body, who fell dead on the spot.

The other then attacked him; but the ensign happened to be an excellent fencer, and the Frenchman, finding he could do nothing with him, and was besides slightly wounded in several places, threw down his sword and surrendered.

When our ensign brought in his prisoner, and quietly said what he had done, there was a universal roar through the regiment, even the colonel relaxed into a grim smile. Of course, nobody believed him; but this he cared for as little as the rest. Neither was the Frenchman believed, although there could be no conceiveable inducement for him to join in such a story. It happened, however, that a staff-officer reconnoitring had seen with his telescope the whole affair, who reported it to the general, and was dispatched at once to our colonel, to know who was the heroic young officer who had performed so gallant a feat.

I never saw the colonel really laugh but this once; he passed into a gruff paroxysm, which I really thought would have choked him.

Hitherto, the officers of our company had escaped all damage by wounds. Our little perspiring captain seemed to possess a charmed life, so many narrow escapes had he. I, myself, had great reason for congratulation; and, on one occasion, cannot to this hour account for my getting off. It was on the evening of the 11th of December, after the action. I was on picquet, and had established my men a little on one side of the crest of a small hill, partially covered with wood, and along the summit of which I had planted my sentries. After visiting them, I thought, as there was abundance of daylight, I would explore a little further in my front; and trusting to a pretty sharp eyesight, with other faculties on the *qui vive*, I dispensed with any escort, even the accompanying corporal. I found everything perfectly quiet, there was no sound or sign of life, and as it was somewhat to the left of where the action had been fought, there was nothing of death either. Suddenly I came upon an open field, partly enclosed by wood, and in the corner

of which I perceived a faint smoke arising from the remains of a fire. There was no one near, and it struck me that it might be an abandoned picquet fire of the enemy, and that not impossibly something—perhaps prog—might have been abandoned by the original occupants of that comfortable berth. I confidently approached the fire, and was warming my hands over the embers, when suddenly there started from the wood five French soldiers, their firelocks in their hands, who rushed towards me, crying: "Rendez vous!"

For a moment I gave up all for lost, when all at once—the men were nearly up to me—I felt an irresistible desire to escape, and turning round, ran off at the top of my speed—not straight away, but diagonally; for I knew that by the former course, I should be as easy a shot as if standing still. Neither did I continue long on one tack; but dodged about, as much like a snipe going against the wind as possible. I had not gone fifteen yards, before

all five had fired at me nearly all at once. I felt the ringing sound of the balls as they seemed to graze me all round, one tearing up the turf close to my foot; but I was not touched, so started straight away like an arrow. Judging of my friends' handiness in the platoon exercise, I was cautious of continuing too long on that course, and resolved myself into a snipe as before. Bang! bang! bang! bang! bang! they went at me again, singly, and nearly in equal time: I, after the first two shots, adapting my time as nearly as I could guess to suit theirs, and dodging as I expected them to fire, then away straight as before. This time I did not think it necessary to turn, but plunged into the wood, the five balls cutting off the twigs, and ripping up the bark of the trees near me as I did so.

I found the sentries with their pieces cocked, and one of them brought his firelock up to cover me as I emerged from the thicket. The picquet was under arms, the captain

perspiring with eagerness to blaze away at anything that might appear; and a staff-officer already arrived to know what was the matter.

In the action of St. Pierre, the next day, my friend Strong was shot through the calves of both legs by the same ball. I bound up the wounds in a temporary way, and was obliged to leave him till the action was over. I then found he had been taken to the rear, and placed in a private house, where he had slept the night before; and the kind-hearted family were taking every care of him. No surgeon had as yet seen him, they being abundantly occupied in more pressing cases consequent upon the enormous carnage of those five terrible days. We lost many men and officers: one remarkably fine young man who was shot in the abdomen, the ball lodging in the spine, seemed to have died in most excruciating agony. He had fallen on his face, and had torn up the grass and earth with his

teeth to that extent, that his mouth was not only full of earth, but his whole face nearly buried in the hole he had made.

Visiting my friend early next morning, I found him getting on well; and the people of the house fully understanding and executing the treatment I had prescribed.

"Ah!" said he, looking sadly up, "this is the time that I miss Marianne. You see it would really have contributed to my advantage, if I had brought her. Wouldn't she have made poultices! and wouldn't she have put them on!"

I must say that our life in this part of France, when not immediately harassed with the near neighbourhood of the enemy, was pleasant enough. The inhabitants were extremely civil, and that not from any particular spirit of conciliation. They soon found out that we cared no more about the Bourbons than we did for Buonaparte—nay, not so much; for we knew nothing of them, and

we had a sincere respect for the military genius of the other. They, therefore, spoke their opinions freely: they were mostly Bourbonists, because they wanted peace, and a cessation of the terrible exactions of the conscription and the taxes. These sentiments, they avowed they were very careful to keep from the knowledge of the French troops, who would not for a moment have tolerated a word against the great chief. This pardonable fanaticism of the French army, still smouldering among them, is perhaps the greatest that military history supplies.

I have as yet said nothing about our own great chief, whom I daily saw for some months from that morning when we were waiting for the signal-rocket from Roncesvalles to commence our march against the French position. He was a man whose expression and appearance betokened great activity, and his manners struck me as remarkably gentlemanlike. This is the only word

by which I can express the idea I formed and still retain of him; and it was a quality by no means universal, or very general, at that time in the army. Officers of high rank would treat those of an inferior grade with the most unbecoming rudeness, would damn them in public and before the men. I have heard a general officer say to a lieutenant-colonel at the head of his regiment, that which no gentleman ought to use towards the lowest or the vilest. The colonel would then, as a set-off, damn his officers, particularly his adjutant and quarter-master; the officers would then particularly damn the men. All this the commander-in-chief set himself to reform by precept, as his despatches inform us; and by example, as we all know. I never saw him either in a hurry or a passion, and I have seen him under very trying circumstances indeed, when orders have been mis-stated or misunderstood, and the very reverse of what was intended was being carried on before his

face. I very rarely saw him without a composed smile on his face, and a quiet intelligence—which, without the appearance of searching, seemed to read every man through and through with whom he conversed.

I knew your "hat-kicking governor"* well, having served in the same division. A most amusingly passionate man. It was a matter of temperament, and had no vindictiveness about it. As he was in the main good-natured, and unquestionably brave, though a little too exacting, and scarcely ever making proper allowances, he was rather popular than otherwise.

It may readily be imagined that the men made themselves very comfortable in the French farm-houses, and the small towns. When plundering had been put down, the people received them hospitably, and they began to find that honesty was the best policy. Not but that poultry would mysteriously disappear or die suddenly, under circumstances very

* See "A Transport Voyage to the Mauritius," by the Author of "Paddiana."

perplexing to account for. A pig has been known bodily to vanish, to the surprise, nay, distress, of a whole regiment; and for a day or two after the men seemed to have invested all their spare coppers in pork. On a march everything comes out to those at all initiated in the figurative language employed by the narrators.

One ingenious way of getting a present of a turkey I will mention. Such things generally come out early in the day, for they could not keep them.

"What d'ye think I had for supper last night, Tom?" said one of our most ingenious purveyors to his own larder.

"How the divil should I know? Perhaps a bit of old goat, with the hair on it."

"Faith, I had not. I'd a ding-dong."

"How did ye get him?"

"Well, I got him by a sort of a kind of an accident. Afther we'd had the drop o' drink at the 'Cock Hardy,' I just strolled about to see

what I'd see; so I goes round by the church, and into the meadows, and round about, and there was the beautifullest little clane house ever you see close agin the churchyard wall, and a garden o' one side and the meadows behind; and I—I'd like to be priest of the parish, and live in that house—but I didn't know as the priest lived there, on'y it tuk my fancy. Well, I went round about, and round about, and as I came back, I comed round by the back of the house, and I looked over a bit of a paling and there I see a great flock o' ding-dongs; there was th' ould cock, and th' ould hin, and the grown-up daughters a-pacing grandly and slowly through the grass; and, says I, 'that's the way my Biddy used to pick up her feet when she went to chapel with her new brogues on after rain.' And with that, th' ould cock seein' me looking at his family over the paling, tuk offense at my attentions, and begin to spread out his tail and to shake his feathers and shiver his wings; and when he'd worked

himself up, he begin to gobble at me. So says I, 'Bad manners to ye; ye may keep a civil tongue in your head, ye ould rap; I'm not making nor meddling wid ye at all, but only admiring your daughters, small blame to me.' Well, faith, that made him mad entirely; and he begins to gobble, and swell, and rag at me shameful. So I tuk up a big stone, and, says I, 'if ye do that agin look out!' Ye'd hardly believe it, but the more I talked to him the worse he got. So, says I, 'take that, ye ould spalpeen,' says I, letting drive at him; but what did I do, but missed him, and knocked down Biddy. Faith, I was in a great state; I wouldn't have touched that one for anything. And th' others cut off, and she kicking on the grass. Well, faith, I wouldn't have done that for ten pound—and she the favourite! but anyhow, says I, I won't lave her there, I'll put her out of her misery, says I; so I tuk my empty haversack, that I had by an accident in my cap, and jumped over the palings, and give

her neck a twisht, as St. Patrick did the shnakes, to put 'em out o' their misery; and puts her into the haversack, and back agin, hot fut, and away I cuts to the small wood beyant.

"So I considered and considered what I'd do, and thinks , if I go back wid me turkey I'll be called a plundering rascal, and get into thrubble, and nobody'll believe it's an accident. But at any rate, says I, ther's no harm in picking Biddy. So I tuk her further in the wood, and scraped away the leaves, and picked her beautiful into the hole, and covered up the feathers wid leaves, and says I, it's hard to tell people without their clothes, and if any one sees her they won't know her. Well, I considered and considered what to do, and I couldn't roast the ding-dong in the wood, for I knew I'd be seen; so, thinks I, I'll go to the priest, says I, for I heered at the 'Cock Hardy' as he spoke English, and maybe he'll tell me what to do. So I goes bowldly to the church, and axed a lady I met close to

the small purty house, says I, 'Ma'am, if ye plaze, where does his Rivirence live? I've a present for him.' Well, the lady hummed and hawed, and didn't rightly understand, and with that, a gentleman who was walking in the garden with a small book in his hand came up to the palin, and says he, 'Did ye inquire for the priest?' says he. 'I'm the priest,' says he; 'did ye want me, my friend?' says he.

"So I made his Rivirence a bow, and axed his pardon for the liberty I tuk; but faith I was most ashamed to look at him when I knowed I'd got his turkey in my sack.

"'Come in, my friend,' says the priest; 'make no apologies; my time belongs to my flock,' says he. 'Are ye Irish?' says he.

"'Faith I am Sir,' says I. 'I'm a Christian. I'm born in Ballyragget, and sorrow Protestant we have at all in the place, more luck to us.' And says I, 'I'm come to offer yer honour a small present that a lady give me

just now,' says I; 'but I heard yer honour spoke English, and says I, maybe he'll give me a word of advice, says I, for they say he's a right good man in the town, and attentive to high and low. And faith it was right glad I was when the lady give me the turkey; for, says I, this 'll go to his Rivirence if I know it: my duty's first to my Church—Father Gavin tould me that—and maybe, says I, he don't keep turkeys, says I, and it 'll be a threat to him, and so,' says I, pulling out the bird, says I, 'here's the small present I brought ye.'

"So his Rivirence tuk the turkey and felt it; and says he, 'that's a great fowl,' says he, 'and I didn't think there'd been any such in the town but mine,' says he, 'and who gave it ye?' 'Well, yer honour,' says I, 'I couldn't justly repeat her name,' says I, 'for it's French, and I haven't tuk much ov that since I came; but she's a fine noble lady,' says I, 'and plump and graceful,' says I, describing her, 'and her eyes as bright as diamonds, and her lips as red as a rose.'

"'Well, never mind the description, my friend,' says he. 'You're a good man, I think,' says he.

"'Faith, Sir,' says I, 'Biddy always tould me so.'

"'But as for the turkey, my friend,' says he, 'I couldn't accept it. Ye've had hard service,' says he, 'in a good cause, in the cause of religion against tyranny and oppression,' says he, 'so keep the turkey, my man,' says he, 'and much good may it do you.'

"And just then I see Serjeant Storks coming up the road, so I slipped the haversack into my cap, and came out to the door with the turkey in my hand, and the priest wid his book in his hand along wid me. And just as Storks came by the gate, says I to his Rivirence, says I, 'plaze yer honour, I don't like to take the turkey from you,' says I, 'for it's fitter for you than me.' 'Yes, yes,' says his Rivirence, 'take it,' says he, 'and much good may it do you.'

"And Storks looked surprised to see me

refusing the turkey, and, says he, when I come up to him, 'what the divil made ye refuse the turkey,' says he, 'I wouldn't have thought the like of yourself, any how; and what did he give it you for?'

"'Well,' says I, 'serjeant, he's a relation of mine,' says I, 'from Ballyragget; ye heered how well he spoke English, only he've got a touch of the French with it now.' So I roasted poor Biddy for supper, and gave the serjeant the liver-wing."

There was a joke about our ardent, perspiring captain which kept the regiment in a roar for a month; indeed, was considered a stock story as long as he remained in the corps. As I happened to live in the same house with him at the time, I can verify the main facts, and relieve him, if still larding this lean earth, from some of the exaggerations with which it was embellished.

On finishing an easy march early in the day, we were told off to a very comfortable house

occupied by an elderly couple and their daughter, a widow scarcely more than five or six-and-twenty. About half a dozen men only were with us, but they were perhaps the most uncontrollable blackguards we happened to have in the corps.

The captain was extremely struck with the widow: her bright eyes, full of fun and mischief; her *petit nez retroussé*, her smart buxom figure, and her general spirit and liveliness, made sad havoc with the susceptible heart of our vivacious commander. He paid her, all through the day, the most solicitous attention; but the widow was coy, there was no getting her at all into the serious line, and every interview tended more and more to the discomfiture of the lover. The men admired her excessively, and declared she was the smartest Frenchwoman they had seen by far since they came into the country. We supped with the family, in all respects as honoured guests; a liberal repast, accompanied and fol-

lowed by a handsome allowance of generous wine. It could not fail to strike even an indifferent observer that during supper-time, and especially after it, the fair widow much softened towards the captain. She paid him great attention, pressed him to eat and drink of the choicest and best, deferred to his opinion, and, it seemed, admired his person also. This to a man of his ardent temperament was like pouring turpentine upon a fire. He was lost in extacy, perspiring with a sense of intense enjoyment. I even believe that he went the length of possessing himself of one of her hands under the table-cloth.

Shortly after supper the old folks withdrew to another apartment, answering to a drawing-room, and I, finding myself *de trop* in a scene where they were getting more loving every moment, followed their example. The rest I had from the captain's own lips; an occasional hiatus being filled up from the loose gossip on the march.

It appeared that the lady's sudden fondness for the captain was in some measure caused by fear. Happening to go into a closet between the *salle-à-manger* and the kitchen where the men were sitting by the fire, her attention was attracted by hearing her own praises, which although her knowledge of English was but slender, she contrived—no doubt from the interest of the subject—pretty well to make out. She also discovered that certain designs were on foot, to take place during the dead of the night, which it may be perhaps unnecessary more particularly to allude to.

Under these trying circumstances she suddenly changed her manner, and formed a counter-design upon the captain, rightly judging that from his undisguised admiration he would readily fall into the trap. She told him that she had given up her bed-room—a double-bedded one—to him, as being the most comfortable in the house: and what was she not capable of doing for those in whom she

took an interest? As for herself, she should hide somewhere, no matter where: there were so many wild people about — her natural protector, alas! gone—what could a poor lone woman do? Don't fear for me, generous Englishman! I shall wrap myself in a cloak and walk about the house, or sit up with my father and mother in their bed-room. "Come," said the lady, "let me show you the bed-room, you have a long march to-morrow, and start early; but my bed—I mean yours now—is ready: let me show you the way."

The captain was naturally overwhelmed with confusion at the thought of expelling the lady from her own room, and thought of the dreary night she must necessarily pass, either in walking about till morning, or setting up with her respectable parents. He could not think of it—gallantry forbad it; if she *would* sit up, why he would, with permission, sit up with her.

The lady did not wholly reject the compro-

mise. She cast down her eyes, blushed, and was silent. By-and-by it came to be a sort of tacit understanding that they were not to be separated, as the lady talked of reading to him, or singing, or playing to beguile the time till daylight.

Now, when people have made up their minds to pass a winter's night together, it seems somewhat ridiculous to consume the weary hours in the execution of vaudevilles or *chansons à boire*, or even in instructive reading, seeing that they must necessarily be more than half asleep, when they might go comfortably to their separate beds and enjoy themselves in refreshing repose till morning. This was to take a common sense view of the thing. True, the beds were in the same room, but in the French society of that time this was no great obstacle. It frequently happened when inns were full, and on similar occasions; and when the persons were elderly or married, and if one went in after the other was asleep, it really

did not seem wholly inadmissible. When at Rome do as Romans do; a line of conduct quite as applicable to the south of France.

How this came to be proposed—or whether proposed at all, or only implicated, or understood without implication, I never could distinctly make out. Certain it is that it came to be settled, and the captain was to go to bed first; and then after an hour or two, or perhaps three or four hours, it was not impossible that the lady might steal in, but not unless he was asleep! One little favour she must ask him—he could not refuse—he must wear her nightcap—he must indeed. No? Generous Englishman! you would not compromise me—your heart is too good. If any one saw you there and knew you, I am lost! If papa or mamma came, in what *would* they say? Now, I can mention to them when I go to say good night, that Mademoiselle Anjoubeau half promised to pass the night in the

other bed. Can you refuse this trifling favo when my reputation is at stake? for you know that you English have strict notions on these points—it would be known to the whole army. Can you refuse when—(here she gently raised the cambric to her eyes, and endeavoured to stifle the incipient sobs).

The captain did not hesitate long on so trifling a point as wearing a nightcap; and to show his good-will, went further than he was asked, and offered to take the nightgown into the bargain.

The lady took him to the room. There was the bed for the generous Englishman, here was the other, a very small one, amply sufficient for her.

"Here's the nightcap, let me put it on. Doucement, Monsieur! Hush! Ah qu'elle est gentille! you positively make a very pretty woman. Let me tie it." And here she executed a double-knot under the captain's chin. "Does it go well behind?" and here she

brought round the strings, and made another double-knot at the back of his neck. "This is the other thing you asked for: take off your coat, and I'll put it on. There, that's enough. Ah, qu'il est gauche, ce n'est pas des pantalons! This way over the head; and now, just let me pin up the collar to the frill of the cap, to hide the whiskers; another pin here—yes, just two or three more behind. Now you are perfect, and, I declare, something like Mademoiselle Anjoubeau—you really are. Good night. Hush!"

With an emphatic gesture, she hurried out of the room, quietly locking the door behind her, and leaving in the key.

"I say, Jack," said one of the men, as they sat by the fire, "I don't see no fun in turning in in that ere loft, when there's a spare bed in the widdy's room, do you?"

"Nor I neither, if so be as I thought she wouldn't kick up a shindy if we was to go in."

"Why, you see, she can't ockypy two beds at once, can she? 'taint at all likely; so if so be as she's agreeable, and wouldn't make no bobbery, why you and me might just as well have our snooze out there, as for to go up into that ere cold loft."

"I don't think as she'd make no bobbery about it: if so be as she did, we'd put a pillow over her mouth—"

Presently the house was alarmed with a terrific outcry, vehement swearing, and the pounding of heavy feet in mortal conflict on the floor. The windows rattled, the timbers shook. Screams of the elderly people, as they came out with a light, were added to the din. The soldiers rushed out of the apartments, the captain after them, perspiring through the frills of the nightcap, and vainly endeavouring to free himself from the pins and knots.

The most remarkable part of the transaction was, that the fair widow, who certainly was not in the room, should have slept so

soundly as not to have been awoke by the uproar.

The battle of Orthes was a very severe action, particularly for us. The division was forced back five times in attempting to force its way into the open ground to deploy; the flank fire of the artillery, and the musketry in front, tearing down the head of the column each time, so that nothing could stand against it.

We had a little drummer belonging to the company I was attached to, the smallest creature, I believe, that ever did carry a drum—certainly that ever carried a pack; and there was no difference between the size of his pack, or in the quantity of its contents, from that of the biggest grenadier in the army. On the march, the men carried his pack by turns, and sometimes himself too, when he was tired. While there was a brisk fire going on at the head of the column, the little drummer came up, and touching my

elbow said: "Will you allow me, Sir, to carry you to the rear?"

"Carry me to the rear! Why?—what for?"

"Because you are badly wounded, Sir."

Following the direction of the drummer's eyes, I looked down at my thigh, and saw the blood flowing pretty copiously down my trowsers: I had previously felt a numbness, such as people have when their limbs are "asleep." The wound, however, was trifling; the ball had gone outside the bone, and was a mere flesh wound, that healed in a few days, thanks to good health and temperate living.

The French drummers are not only better performers, but of more importance in an army than ours. They generally come flourishing out in front, as an encouragement to the men to come on. I don't know how it was, but the skirmishers delighted in knocking over a drummer, which seemed an unnecessary enmity on their part, seeing that the drummer was

innocuous to them except from the noise he made. One day, a wood in our front was strongly occupied by the enemy, whose numbers there was no way of ascertaining. It would appear that the officers wanted them to show themselves as much as we did, for they sent drummer after drummer out of the wood to beat the advance, or whatever they call it; but still the men remained quietly amongst the trees. All along their front was our line of skirmishers, some lying down, others ensconced behind such small cover as the place afforded. No sooner did the first drummer come out, than he was knocked over by a shot, apparently dead. The second, no whit daunted by the fate of the first, even squared his elbows with more defiance; but, in a few seconds, a ball through his leg sent him back painfully hopping into the wood. Then there came a third, and we heard the metallic ring of a shot passing through his brass drum; immediately after he put his hand quickly to

his bear-skin cap, as if one had gone through that also; in a minute or two he fell. The enemy, enraged at this, threw out a line of skirmishers, and forced our men to retire by alternate ranks, and disputing every inch of the ground. Presently they fed the skirmishers with the supports, and finally the reserve; and under their overwhelming fire, two columns were formed from the wood, and thrown right against the centre of the division, bringing on one of the most severe actions we had been engaged in. Their object apparently was to draw us forward to the wood, by making a pretence of weakness and backwardness.

When not absolutely obliged to keep the field, the way of taking lodgings for the division was pleasantly summary. An officer of the quartermaster-general's department rode into the town to be halted in, with a piece of chalk in his pocket. After a slight survey of the place, and fixing upon head-quarters,

and setting apart a few reserved houses, he commenced chalking numbers on the doors, high or low, according to the size of the building—twenty on one, thirty on another, and so on. As the regiments marched in, they were directed to the street appointed for them, and then told off in squads, answering to the numbers on the houses, into which they entered, and made themselves at home at once.

In places where the inhabitants were unaccustomed to the march of armies, they were a little put out at first. In a few minutes they had knapsacks all over the premises, liberal fires lighted in the rooms, and a pleasant sound of singing, whistling, and hallooing about the premises. The cook was a little embarrassed, for her occupation was suddenly gone. The number of assistants she had was astonishing. They kindly relieved her of her frying-pan, her stew-pan, her gridiron, nay, of her grate itself; good-humouredly, however, and not without bois-

terous gallantry. The back yard and garden were speedily ransacked, and perhaps any insurance effected upon cocks and hens might have been at a slight discount; the long-stalked cabbages also were freely laid under contribution. The cook, if she were a wise virgin, would incontinently withdraw any meat which she might have in the pot.

I once saw a plunderer detected by the meat he had stolen. Sitting by the kitchen fire, he had observed with much interest a good solid square piece of beef put into the pot some three hours before dinner, to simmer into that most delicious of all good things—bouillie, and make the soup. The beef went in at ten, and the family dined at one: the column, however, was to march at twelve; and Jack thought, that as he liked his meat less done than the French usually have it, it would furnish a nice little lunch for him about half-past eleven, or perhaps better still, be carried off when the bugle sounded. He had

taken the measure of the beef with his eye. and having with attentive civility brought in a quantity of wood for the cook, he contrived to put amongst it a piece pretty nearly answering in shape and size to the meat in the pot.

Whether it was, that the girl suspected our Greek and his favours, or really liked his company, does not appear; but she took especial care not to leave him alone with the bouillie. It was now near twelve. His comrades had put on their packs, and were gone out: he must make short work of it in some way. He tried love-making—a hacknied, but not the less effectual, mode of dealing with cooks. His French was not Parisian; but he made up with gestures and other demonstrations for the short-comings of language. He loved her, that he did—if she'd only marry him when he came back in a fortnight, he should be the happiest chap! "You may meet with a more pleasanter, and a more

richer, and a more showyer, but you'll never meet with a more lovinger beggar nor me. I be'ant one o' them as says what I don't mean, I be'ant. If you could lend a fellow sich a thing as ten sous, now, till I comes back, I'd repay you, 'pon my life. I often wants a bit to eat; for I don't take nothink that ain't give to me, or what I buys; I know you'll lend us the browns, won't ye, old gall?"

The old gall, however, had not any coppers in her pocket—perhaps a fact he had previously ascertained—but she had a few up stairs, and she would fetch him down the ten sous, particularly on the strength of the proposal.

Our friend lost no time while the *sabots* were clattering up the brick stairs to the garret; took the piece of beef out of the pot, and substituted the lump of wood in its stead; but, fearing that the smoke might be seen from the haversack, he crammed the

beef into his cap, and sat patiently waiting the return of his true love.

Jack received the sous as a positive god-send, that forming at first no part of his scheme; and taking a warm and loving leave of the girl, hastened out to parade as the bugle sounded.

It is no very easy thing for a man to stand steady under arms, with a piece of hot, boiled beef upon his bare head, especially with the soup running down his face and into his neck: his appearance, therefore, rather arrested the captain's attention.

"What makes this man sweat so? Is there anything the matter?"

"I've a great burning at the top of my head, Sir."

"Fall out, then. Take him to the doctor."

The doctor came from the northern part of the United Kingdom, and was very suspicious of strange symptoms.

"Ye've a burning in yer heed, ye say?

Ye look vera flushed and feverish, my man; but yer pulse is good, and yer tongue's not so bad, and yer skin's not particularly hot; so I'd like to look at yer heed, my man."

Of course the nature of his complaint was soon made apparent, and he was marched back to the house from whence he came, with the bouillie in his hand, and confronted with the cook, whose surprise was extreme, as she had verified the existence of the beef, as she fancied, since her true love's departure; and the comedy of the scene was rather heightened when she took from the pot the wooden substitute for the bouillie. The man was considered fortunate in escaping with a corporal punishment of three hundred lashes, and the restoration of the ten sous; the latter a poor recompense for the incipient hopes which were nipped in the bud.

We suffered comparatively little in the battle of Toulouse, the principal loss in that action falling on the Spaniards and Scotch,

with this difference in the results, that the latter succeeded when the former had failed. The terrific slaughter of the Spaniards was one of the most dreadful episodes of the war. Their right wing, unable to stand the galling fire from the French works, broke, and a considerable number of them rushed for shelter into a deep hollow way, where they were not only helpless, but unable to escape. The ensuing scene is best told in the words of the historian:

"Then the French came leaping out of their works with loud cries, and lining the edge of the hollow road, poured an incessant stream of shot upon the helpless crowds entangled in the gulf below; while the battery from the Bridge of Mataban, constructed to rake this opening, sent its bullets from flank to flank, hissing through the quivering mass of flesh and bones."*

Hours after this, the convulsive movements

* Napier, vi, 640.

of agony in this hideous mass, and the faint screams of those buried in it, too badly hurt to struggle out, gave a character of appalling horror to this mangled heap.

While negotiations were going on for a cessation of hostilities, our regiment was stationed in a village near Toulouse, where I received the following letter from my uncle:

"My dear Boy,

"I am surprised to find, from Meyer and Elphick, that you have given them no order for clothes since you left England. I hope you are not getting careless or slovenly in your dress, which is an extremely bad fault. Remember what Lord Chesterfield says: 'A young man who is careless at twenty, will be a sloven at thirty, and stink at forty.' Indeed, I know nothing more disagreeable to look upon than a slovenly young man, except a 'beau-nasty;' a state which I am sure you have too much taste ever to fall into.

"In case you should want more clothes, which I am sure you must by this time, I send you a measuring tape, graduated to the tenth of an inch, which I suppose will be near enough, and your measure will surely require some alteration. I should not employ the regimental tailor to do this, as he would probably botch it from jealousy or ignorance. Your servant may manage it, if he is intelligent—if not, change him; and be careful to see the measure yourself, before you take down the numbers; then forward it to me, and I will see it executed.

"I must not forget to tell you that your Aunt Jack is deranged, but well taken care of, and, I understand, very comfortable.

"Yours affectionately,

"ARTHUR FEATHERSTONE.

"P.S.—Be very particular in Elphick's measure, as I hear he doesn't like cutting from these measured tapes, but prefers his own

snips on parchment. This, however, is impossible, and we could not ask him to cut from another man's snips. It was a fortunate thing your wound was so slight, as I don't think Elphick would have cut for you if there had been any contraction of the limb; I know that nothing disgusts him so much as cutting for cripples. You will perceive in the instructions I send, that Elphick requires seven measures for size and three for length in each leg, besides the waist; be most particular in the inside length, as so much of the fit depends on this; and mind what I always told you it was so essential that a breeches-maker should know. Shall I send you another box of boots? You don't tell me if the last arrived safe: they were addressed to your regiment with Lord Wellington's army, south of France; but Hoby's stupid fellow did not add a French direction, as he ought to have done. Your boots cannot last long in such a country as you describe. I hope, however,

that you keep yourself as much off the ground as possible. I conclude, of course, that you keep a horse, and hope that you took every opportunity of hunting with Lord Wellington if he brought out his hounds with him. Always ride on a march; nothing produces a coarse ungentlemanlike foot so much as walking on hard roads in thick boots or shoes. Corns and bunions are all very well for the regular toe-crushers, but I should be very sorry to see you in Pall Mall with a pair of infantry feet. Keep the instructions and the tape for another time.

"Yours,

"A. F."

We got on admirably, both officers and men, with the French inhabitants. Dinners, balls, pic-nics, made us soon forget the horrors of war: and it is, in fact, to such transitions that a military life is indebted for its wild pleasures and peculiar and intense excitements.

It was at this epoch that my friend Strong had an offer from a widow lady of some property, residing in a pretty house surrounded by her own land. As he was of a decidedly uxorious turn, I rather persuaded him that it would conduce to his advantage to accept it; true, however, to his former flame, which burnt up so rapidly at Chichester, he steadily rejected the advances made him. In reference to this subject he often exclaimed: "Wouldn't she be jealous if she knew this! and wouldn't Maria pitch into her if she was here!"

Our men were particularly popular with the French; and I have always remarked that they amalgamate well with the people of that country; the earnest enduring energy of the one supplying what is most needed in the lighter and more vivacious qualities of the other nation. The English prisoners were well treated, very much their own masters, extremely popular, and visibly improved the

places they were stationed at. They were actually a benefit to the country, drained as it was of able-bodied men by the conscription: and there was no comparison between their condition and that of the unfortunate French, who were condemned to the abominations of Dartmoor or the hulks.

Travelling with a friend four years after these transactions, we stumbled upon a small town where five hundred English prisoners had been stationed. The town of Montignac is about eleven leagues east of Perigeux, situate in a wild country almost wholly uncultivated and covered with heath. We traversed the country in the humble capacity of pedestrians, and as if the eleven leagues had not been sufficient for one day, we unhappily prolonged the march for at least a couple of hours, by taking a short cut pointed out to us through the dreary moors.

Arriving at Montignac some hours after dark, we were accosted by a portly personage amply

filling the doorway of a moderate-sized but comfortable looking roadside inn, almost the first house we came to, and bearing on its front the attractive announcement, "Au Brave Canonnier, on loge à pied et à cheval." Our friend accosted us as Englishmen at once—much to our surprise, as in these remote parts of France, at that period, the knowledge of the natives was almost wholly confined to the concerns of their own immediate neighbourhood—and urged us, upon the strength of his perfect acquaintance with our habits, to "descend" at his hotel, and there pass the night.

In such cases, where the descent is only from thick shoes to slippers, an English landlord would show but little anxiety in the matter; our friend, however, ushered us in with much ceremony, shouted "ma mie" to his wife, called Fanchon, and Nannette, and Jacques—in fact, made as great a clatter as if we had come in a coach-and-six.

"Here, take these gentlemen's effects up stairs, with jugs of hot water: quick, quick!"

"And, if you please, a couple of tubs—"

"We know, we know," chimed in the landlady, a little animated woman, with black eyes without any whites, "we know all about that; we haven't had five hundred Englishmen living with us for years, and not know something of your habits—unhappy the day they left us!"

"You will naturally require dinner?" said the landlord.

"*Au plus vite*—something plain, and easily got ready—"

"We know, we know," said the landlady, "all about that; leave it to us, by the time you have arranged your dress, the soup will be on the table."

All this was entirely incomprehensible. In other places similarly situated, the difficulty was to make ourselves understood, for few spoke French, but a jargon incomprehensible even to a Frenchman.

By particular desire the dinner-table was laid before an enormous wood fire in the kitchen, the culinary operations being carried on in a supplementary kitchen adjoining. On entering the larger apartment, we were struck with the unusual appearance of a settle, that most comfortable of homely English comforts, time out of mind the great attractive feature of inn kitchens—where our country parsons have smoked their pipes, and from whence our Tom Joneses, and Partridges, and Corporal Trims and Trunnions and Pipeses, Bonifaces, village schoolmasters, and adventurers of all kinds have furnished endless materials for the raciest of our romance writers; a machine so sociably comfortable, as well as historically interesting, that it may be considered our great national piece of furniture, to which in the real luxury of ease, and shelter from draughts of air, no drawing-room can furnish a parallel.

"Ah, ah!" said the landlord, seeing us talking about the settle, "c'est l'ouvrage de vos compatriotes; c'est grand ça; c'est magnifique!"

and here he walked backwards, and looked his admiration with head gently turned aside.

"This thing," said the landlord, with a confidential air, and tapping the settle with his knuckle, "this has brought me most of the custom in the place; without this we were nothing, living as we do out of the town. Hasn't it, ma mie?" touching his wife, just to pass on to her a part of his enthusiasm.

"But that is not the only thing they made for us," returned the lady, rather archly, "you don't forget this in the cold winter nights, when we are half buried in snow, and the sleet hisses against the windows, and the wolves are howling round the house, and you hide even your head under the clothes. You know you do. Ah! ha!" and here she put her arm affectionately round the warming-pan, and fondled its great staring brazen face. "You remember that poor man who fell benumbed with cold almost at our door, who would have been dead in a few minutes, and eaten up before morning

if we had not discovered him by accident; and how we brought him round by running the pan over him for half an hour!"

"Ils ont fait ça aussi!" said Nannette, anxiously putting in a word, and pointing to a great beech-wood easy chair on the other side of the fire-place.

"Et ça aussi!" cried Fanchon, clattering in upon her huge *sabots* with a milk-white pail resting on her hip. "C'est Jean Thomas qui m'a fait ça," and here she repressed, with a coarse sonorous sniff, an incipient disposition to snivel.

"The fact is," said the landlord, "the English were the making of the place. They paved the street, which before was up to your knees in mud; they roofed the church; they were always working at something or other winter and summer; they got in the harvest, such as it is in this poor country; they drained and fenced the land and improved it. Ah! many a man now well to do, owes what he has

to the English. Didn't they," said he, appealing to his wife, "make Philoche and his family?"

"Ah, c'est trop fort."

"Why, what would he and they have been now? Why, keeping their paltry little shop, and their son behind the counter selling soap and candles, instead of studying for the bar, as he is, at Perigeux. Didn't he set up for a tanner on the strength of the English, and was there ever such leather seen in these parts before or since? We called it the English leather, and it was sent to Perigeux, and even to Bordeaux. They do it pretty well now; but not so good, oh! not so good as then; and now Philoche has his country house and servants, and horses and carriage. Why, I say they made him and his family what they are. But here's the soup; then a small portion of *bouillie* and *pommes de terre*, we don't forget them; then a *blanquette de veau*—Fanchon's famous for that; but don't throw away your appetites quite upon them: there's a *poularde*

aux truffes coming. And now, Messieurs, I have a bottle of Bordeaux wine, such as you will not find the like of in this town, nor a better in any other."

In the course of the evening the *habitués* of the "Brave Canonnier" dropped in, cozy village gossips, with ideas as circumscribed as their own little town, hinting in the darkest *patois*, even made more dark by contractions and omissions, and eked out with shrugs and winks, at the scandal of the place. Then digressing to us, and safe in their mysterious dialect, discussing at much length the general qualities of the English nation. The schoolmaster became quite eloquent on this theme. Once to a question from the landlady in French, he diverged into that language, and informed her that England was about four or five days' sail from France, even less with a very fair wind, no doubt fully possessed of the fact that Bordeaux was the nearest port to that country. One little anxious man put endless

statistical questions, exclaimed, in return for every piece of information: "Ah, il y a des étranges choses sur la terre!" Meanwhile Nannette was working at a side table, occasionally throwing a few words into the conversation, and Fanchon making believe to go about the household work, but for the most part standing to listen.

The next day brought with it such a tempest of wind and rain, that we could not find in our hearts to leave the friendly shelter of the settle, much to the satisfaction of our worthy host and his family, who, independent of a great deal of kindly feelings towards our countrymen, were not sorry, in a professional point of view, to see a couple of lions at the "Brave Canonnier." The droppers-in were pretty frequent during the day, and in the evening another numerous party had assembled. Excellent stories, no doubt, were recollected of the English prisoners, but, unhappily to us, conveyed in a dead lan-

guage. One, however, being a stock story of the place, was kindly translated to us by the landlady.

"This gentleman," said she, "was just observing that the English were always employing themselves somehow. Even in the depth of winter they contrived to find themselves work. I don't speak of the tailors and shoemakers, and such like, who could work at their trades as well then as in the summer, but they used to get out and sweep the snow off the streets, and make the place look clean and nice; but one man had a curious fancy of fishing for wolves."

"Fishing for wolves!"

"Oui, Monsieur. He lived with a poor old man, in a small house outside the town, on the heath. He was a sort of a smith, and worked (I mean the soldier did) in iron and that kind of thing, and made beautiful locks and keys, the neatest and nicest I ever saw,

not like the great clumsy things we have. Well, in the dead of winter, when the snow had lain long on the ground and the country was all covered so deep, that no one could venture to go far from home for fear of being caught and smothered in a snow-storm, says the soldier to the old man, 'I think,' says he, 'I can catch you a good fish to-night, if you'll stop up and help me.' Well, the old man wondered what he could mean by fishing at that time of year; but, Lord, the English do such odd things, that he wasn't anything like so much surprised as if anybody else had said so.

"Well, Sir, the soldier was hammering all day in the little workshop he had made himself; for he had no end of work in making locks and other iron-work, and towards evening he showed the old man a strong hook he had made, with a small strong chain to it, about half a yard long. 'And now,' says the soldier,

'I'll go to the butchers and get a little meat to bait my hook with.' After he had got it ready, the old man and he sat down to supper; and, to be sure, how the snow did drive that night! I remember it well. I thought by morning the whole town would be buried.

"Well, presently, as the night got on, they heard the wolves howling dismally about; and presently one comes and scratches the snow from the door, and sniffs under it, and then scratches again, for no doubt he smelt the raw meat that the soldier had got for his bait. So the soldier went to the upper room and threw out a piece of meat, and three or four wolves rushed at and eat it up in a minute, and seemed inclined to eat one another up too, they were so hungry. Well, then the soldier took his chain and tied it tight round another piece of meat, and fastened a rope to the chain and threw that out, making the end of the rope fast to the window to a staple he had

fixed there. Then he shut the window, and came down stairs. Now you know, Sir, that wolves are the most suspicious creatures in the world, and the sight of a rope or chain, or anything dangling about, frightens them at once, for they fancy there is some trick in it to catch them; and nobody that ever I knew was able to 'tice them on like this Englishmen; but then, of course, he had been well used to wolf-fishing in his own country, and perhaps made a livelihood by it before he went to the army." Here there was a general nodding of heads and affirmative exclamations, as much as to say, 'of course,' 'no doubt,' 'a common thing in that country.'

"Why, gentlemen," said the schoolmaster, "the wolves in that country are so numerous, that the King—not the present one, but some time ago—allowed the taxes to be paid in wolves' heads, as an inducement to people to destroy them."

"There is no doubt in the world," said the anxious little man, "that the soldier used to pay his rates in this way. Il y a des étranges choses sur la terre!"

"Well, gentlemen," continued the landlady, "the wolves were very shy of the rope and chain at first, and kept off at a distance; but hunger got the better of them, and they sniffed and sniffed, and came nearer and nearer, and, at last, one bolder than the rest comes and gives the meat a pull, and that rattled the chain, and off he started; but the taste of the meat was so nice that he couldn't keep away from it, so he came and gave it another tug, but he could not get it off the chain. Well, the others seeing that no harm came, came and tugged too, and at last amongst them they tore the meat out in bits, and just got a taste apiece. This was what the Englishman wanted; for he knew that when they found there was no harm in

the chain, and they'd got a taste of the meat too, they'd come on the next time bolder and bolder.

"So he went and pulled up his chain, and put another bit on, but just fixed lightly to it; and directly that was dropped, the first that came up, ripped it off and swallowed it whole. Then the Englishman pulled up the chain again, and fixed his hook in a nice slice of meat, and fastened the hook to the chain, and then dropped it down again; and this time four of them came, and the biggest of all took the piece of meat in his mouth to swallow it, when the soldier, who kept the line in his hand, gave it a jerk, and fixed the hook firm in the wolf's mouth, and he and the old man coming to the window, the rest ran off; and they pulled the wolf up, and dispatched him as he hung outside the window Wasn't that a clever trick? and in the course of that winter he caught as many as a dozen wolves—"

"A dozen! nearer thirty."

"No, not so many as thirty, but above twenty, at any rate."

"And you really think," said the anxious man, "that he paid his rent and taxes with wolves' heads in his own country?"

"I have not a doubt of it," said the schoolmaster. "You know that the principal money they have in that country is paper; and surely wolves' heads are as good as that."

"Ah, mon Dieu! il y a des étranges choses sur la terre!"

The next day the weather moderated; and we prepared, after a hearty breakfast, to bid adieu to our friends of the "Brave Canonnier." This was the only time in my life that I ever had occasion to find fault with the reckoning —as being too small. The charges were so apparently *un*reasonable for the landlord, that we remonstrated. He was, however, firm as a rock; Madame was firm; and Fanchon

touching me by the elbow, made a gesture, as much as to say, 'Let him alone, he knows what he's about; he has got quite enough, depend upon it.'

Going up stairs to pack the knapsacks, this young lady put herself in the way, and gently bespoke attention. She hardly knew what to say; hoped we would not think it strange; but she knew she should never see him again: and here her eyes silently filled with tears. We should, though—we should no doubt see Jean Thomas in England, and would we tell him that she had got it still—the "gage" he left her. Here she took hold of a small black ribbon tied round her neck, and upon pulling it, drew from the sacred depths of her bodice a tobacco-stopper! She never would part with it—never, never, never! And then she pressed the tobacco-stopper with her two hands to her face, and tried in vain to sniff down her emotion.

"No, never," said Fanchon, "even if I *do* marry the baker."

We prevailed upon her to send a couple of kisses to Jean Thomas, to be delivered in the best way we could when we met him. The one consigned to me, I am sorry to say, I have not as yet had an opportunity of delivering.

This episode of Montignac is, however, a digression, or rather anticipation, in the history.

I never remember to have lived so well, or fed so luxuriously, as we did in Toulouse, and indeed throughout those parts in the south of France which we happened to visit after hostilities had ceased between the armies. The hotels were excellent, and there was a refinement and *recherche* in their way of getting up entertainments, at that time unknown amongst us, except indeed at the best private tables. We tried extensively "thy truffles

Périgord, thy hams Bayonne," to say nothing of that exquisite delicacy, the *pâtés de fois gras* of Strasbourg, of which a slight notice will be taken at a subsequent portion of this history.

CHAPTER V.

TO AMERICA.

One afternoon we received a route to march the next day towards Bordeaux, and a private letter informed the colonel that as soon as vessels arrived to convey us, we were to be shipped for America. Here was a new and unexpected excitement; of a pleasureable kind I believe to most, but much regret was experienced at leaving this luxurious and hospitable country.

After a few days at Bordeaux, rendered somewhat unpleasant by the jealousy of the

French officers, who since the termination of the war were become very sulky and unapproachable, we embarked in small vessels to our man-of-war, which was of too deep a draught of water, I presume, to come up the river.

The ship we were put on board was in the highest state of efficiency—painfully clean—for no milk-pail in a model dairy was ever scrubbed whiter than her decks. Her yards as she lay at anchor were square to an inch; and it seemed the peculiar duty of one of the officers to be perpetually rowed round and round her, that his critical eye might detect anything amiss in her appearance.

Happening to go ashore before we sailed, I went into an hotel in Royan, the coffee-room of which was full of officers of both services. The waiter, who spoke English, was addressing one of them, and asked if he wanted any refreshment.

"Yes! Soldier—split and toasted. Brandy—cold without!"

I had no difficulty in recognising my old acquaintance, Lieut. Briggs, R.N.

I am one who prefer the ease and freedom of a transport to the beautiful precision and etiquette of a man-of-war — especially when commanded by smart officers. The only approach to comfort which a miserable landsman has at sea is the liberty of doing and dressing as he likes, and of lounging about where he will. Accordingly when off duty, these privileges are fully conceded to him: but the case is wholly different in a man-of-war. You must be dressed in uniform when you come on deck, there must be no lying or lounging about, no sitting on a gun, or even leaning against it on its carriage, nay, familiarly to pat it on the breech is considered an unwarrantable liberty. The captain monopolizes the whole windward side of the deck himself; this is his peculiar walk, rendering it impossible for any one to come betwixt the wind and his nobility. All other officers, military or

naval, are to the leeward side, which at the breathing time of day, when everybody makes it a point of conscience to walk up and down, renders it like the full tide of Fleet Street or Cheapside.

Now and then the chief calls up some one to walk with him, or on points of duty, and when he gets tired of him, touches his hat, which is a signal for the favoured one to slink back amongst the crowd. As regards touching the hat or cap, it is a matter of serious etiquette on board a Queen's ship. You must never come on deck without this ceremony, whether from another vessel or only from a cabin below. The officer in charge of the deck returns the salute, and looks exceedingly sulky if you omit it. Even the captain is bound down to this ceremony, and the most thoughtless midshipman never forgets it. It is directed to no particular person, but a compliment to the Queen's quarter-deck; upon which, though her Majesty is not present in person, she is

supposed to be in spirit. I trained myself so thoroughly to this practice, that I even now carry it out in the river steamers, imagining that although Her Majesty's spirit may be somewhat diluted in these fresh waters, yet that it cannot be quite a homœopathic quantity, even in the 'Matrimony,' the 'Lily,' and the 'Bee.'

When nearly off the banks of Newfoundland, a strange vessel was descried in the offing, which from her square-cut white sails was supposed to be an American man-of-war. Every sail that the ship could bear was immediately crowded upon her, and she groaned and strained through the water like a distressed animal. The American, or whatever it was, held her own, and after a whole day's chase we had hardly done more than lift half a topsail above the water. At night the wind left us, and the strange sail crept away.

At a hint from the captain—for no one would have ventured upon such a thing with-

out his authority — the lines were got out, and presently huge cod-fish were seen struggling upwards through the clear, green water. Enough were caught in a few hours to supply the whole crew for several days.

We shortly after touched at Halifax, and it was then discovered that our place of destination was the Penobscot river, whither we were soon transported. We landed without opposition, the Americans being wholly unprepared for such a visit. Their militia made a feeble demonstration, and a few shots were fired, but without damage to either party. We marched to a considerable distance into the country, taking possession of the towns along the river.

I had here occasion to remark the extreme alacrity of a battalion of German riflemen belonging to our expedition, their smartness and cheerfulness on the march contrasting very favourably with the more sulky demeanour of

our own men, who could not comprehend the necessity of long marches without an enemy showing himself. When we approached a town, the Germans dashed forward in double time; and by the time the column arrived, they had their picquets on the roads, and their sentries in possession of the public buildings, as if they had been quartered there for a week.

A wing of our regiment was stationed in a small clean town about twelve miles inland, and after a time became on good terms with the inhabitants, who at first were extremely reserved and shy at any intercourse with us. I took up my abode with a respectable widow lady, Mrs. Jackson, who had a daughter grown up, another just entering her teens, and a third, called Fatherless, from being a posthumous child of the late Mr. Jackson's, about eight or nine years old.

I had, of course, to bear many cutting remarks upon British policy, British tyranny, British aggression, and the like, which, as I

neither knew nor cared about the cause of quarrel between the two countries, affected me very little. They soon found out that I was a mere machine, not given to express myself either in or out of the ranks with any freedom as to the acts of even my own superior officers, still less upon the schemes of the Government, and indeed lamentably ignorant upon every political subject whatever; so, finding that they could lead me into no argument, still less any angry discussion, and that there was little chance of the general policy of either country being affected by getting up a private squabble on the Penobscot, they suffered the matter to drop into silence—ignoble and ignominious on my part, no doubt.

We soon settled into a sort of friendship. I gave myself up to shooting and fishing in the intervals of military duty, now and then assisted at a party; and having hired a rude kind of gig suitable to my avocations, was occasionally

favoured with Miss Jackson's company to a *tête-à-tête* drive through the woods.

America is certainly the Paradise of unmarried ladies, for they go where they like without a thought of impropriety; but although frank and outspoken enough and to spare on some points, they are excessively and amusingly sensitive on others, as I found to my cost.

At first we were accompanied by Fatherless, or the second daughter; but the leathern convenience not being constructed to hold three, we subsequently dispensed with the pleasure of their company.

During these excursions our conversation frequently took the direction of settling in life, its cares and comforts, duties, trials, pleasures. We found out such sweet spots for a "location," with and without the advantages of water-power, or the agreeable neighbourhood of a swamp. I found out that she was a perfect mistress of hominy and all sweet fixings, an adept at the

corning of peach-fed bacon, and bore with the greatest equanimity the most direct allusions to the cares arising from the possession of chopping boys, as an appropriate adjunct to the sylvan Paradise we had pictured to ourselves.

One morning finding that the linen had not come from the laundress, I rang the handbell outside the bed-room door, and Miss Jackson, in the absence of my servant and the help being otherwise engaged, answered the appeal.

"If you please, I want a shirt—I haven't one to put on."

"Oh my!" said the scared young lady, retiring most precipitately, "you Britishers are so plain-spoken, I declare it's quite indeliate!"

On another occasion I happened to make one in a carriage which was something of a cross between a cart and a phaeton, and holding four with rather inconvenient compactness. Fearing that from my length of limb I occupied a somewhat larger location than I was entitled to,

I appealed to the young lady opposite, and hoped she had room enough for her knees.

She coloured up, glanced at her mamma, and then in some confusion, with downcast eyes, muttered: "Really—upon my word—I can't realize your Europe manners. I'm awful shocked! Indeed, Mr. B., I'm afraid you're quite a libertine!"

There was a very stately lady in the place, who was considered quite a pattern of excellence in manners as well as other things, partly, I suspect, because her husband had obtained by virtue of some Government situation the title of Honourable. It was therefore necessary when visiting her to be more than ever upon one's guard. I had been betraying my extreme ignorance upon the subject of the great wars which took place under Washington and others when the colony threw off its allegiance to the old country, and became a bundle of free states. Never surely was ignorance more profound or humiliating than

mine on this occasion, for I did not even know the names of half the great battles that had been fought, and when I heard them, was quite in the dark as to which side won the day.

This, with the kindest contempt, was set down to my wishing to seem in ignorance of that which told so much against my country. I knew of course that Burgoyne had surrendered, but I made a terrific blunder about Gates, who I really thought belonged to us—a wicked attempt to plunder her of one of her brightest jewels—and she was naturally disgusted to be reminded that Lord Cornwallis surrendered his seven thousand men to an American army, four thousand of whom were veteran French soldiers. Another fact I also happened to possess, that that heroic army which delivered them from our galling yoke had never been paid in any shape by the American people, nor have their descendants received one farthing of the arrears up to that day or to this; indeed,

the only money that found its way to them was that advanced by France and Holland.

From past times we fell to talk of the present: of society—of female beauty, its greater durability with us, its more evanescent radiance with them. She passed in review the young ladies who had the greatest pretensions in that particular. One she named as singularly handsome. I thought less of her beauty than her vivacity—I admired her because she was so very gay.

"Gay, Sir!" said the lady, drawing herself up to her full height, and even an inch or two beyond it; "gay, Sir! I have known Miss Aspasia Stallibrass from her infancy, and I have no hesitation in stating my entire conviction that she is most decidedly chaste!"

Hints such as these may be valuable to the travelling European. I will give him another. We all know that bright chanticleer proclaims the morn in most countries upon the face of this globe, and inconveniently to those

who like a morning slumber. He is as wide awake in America as elsewhere; but—oh no, we never mention him, his real, common, familiar name is never heard. He is a "rooster." How they get over the poets I don't know: to us it would sound odd to quote the lines:

> "To hear the rooster with lively din,
> Scatter the rear of darkness thin,
> And from the stack or the barn door,
> Proudly strut his dames before."

There is even a more serious difficulty. Did Peter's delinquency take place before the rooster-crow? Neither is it endurable in a compound word. The well-known officer on board a man-of-war is a rooster-swain, and the midshipman's berth the rooster-pit. A friend of mine got into such a scrape in this matter, that unless quite sure that all then present are dead, he will certainly never show his face again on the Penobscot.

It was a solemn dinner, few but select. At

the second course there came in a dish of our most highly esteemed winter game-birds, their long bills transfixing their sides, and sitting in brown placidity upon their rather dirty cushions. The lady of the house asked my friend what he would take? With culpable incautiousness he answered:

"I'll trouble you, if you please, for some ——," mentioning our common, unrefined name for the bird.

The lady laid down her knife and fork, her face was turned upside down, but she cast an appealing glance to her husband at the other end of the table, as much as to say: "I dare say he doesn't mean it—don't murder him!"

But the culprit got even deeper into the mire, by expressing a partiality for a certain kind of shooting of which these birds are the ordinary victims. It is even impossible to say how much further he might have committed himself, had not a neighbouring gentleman kindly come to the rescue, and informed him, in a

grave whisper, that "in this enlightened country the bird was called a timber-doodle."

In the care they take not to spoil the tempers of their children by contradiction, my brave Atlantic friends seemed to take a lesson from the Indians, who never correct a boy. Mrs. Jackson carried this out to the other sex, and often in our grave discussions would appeal to her little girl of nine, when she was evidently thinking of something quite different.

"Fatherless, my dear, what is your opinion upon the subject under discussion?"

"Ma, I guess I love plum-fixings better nor hominy."

Referring to their extreme sensitiveness on certain points, I may quote another instance. I was taking a stroll in the garden with the three young ladies, and we were oscillating up and down the walk along the lower end, divided from an orchard by a low paling. In the orchard was hung the whole week's washing,

and as my things were, or ought to have been, displayed with the general stock, my eyes involuntarily took the direction of the lines, and I checked off in my mind the different items as I happened to discover them.

I observed a gravity steal over the party; eyes were cast down, perhaps as a corrective hint to the unauthorized excursions which mine were making; and answers came short and dry. It is my nature to fret under suspicion, and if the friction be excessive, even to take fire; but I felt a conviction that in this case I had somehow grossly committed myself.

"My dear Miss Jackson, what is the matter?"

"Your familiarity, Sir, under the circumstances, is not justifiable."

"Have I said anything wrong?"

"You have *said* nothing, Sir, but your looks have betrayed the most gross indelicacy."

"Why I was only counting my linen. The fact is, I miss a pair of ——"

"Stop, Sir! Phryne, my dear, and you, Fatherless, had better seek the house—do not tarry. Obscenity, when expressed by looks, is sufficiently revolting; let me spare your pure ears the greater insult of words. Let us change the location, Sir," and accordingly we moved away from the shocking sight of the clean linen.

To my great disappointment the troops were suddenly recalled from this pleasant country, and we sailed to Halifax, to wait for orders as to our future destination. While there, a letter came to me from my uncle; it ran thus:—

"My dear Boy,

"I have just heard from your new colonel, who, you are probably aware, was once with me in the Coldstreams. A good fellow enough, but I used to think a little coarse.

He gives me a good account of you; but one thing I am sorry to hear, that you have taken to associate with the people of the country, which I wonder at, for they must be a very queer set—people in colonies always are, and the Americans are worse than colonists. Can you expect anything like decent manners or propriety in a people who buy their trowsers ready made, call them 'pants,' and care nothing if they fit like a sack or a sentry-box? I can conceive nothing more disgusting than this.

"He also tells me that you have taken to drive out the young women in gigs, which is very objectionable. Generally when a man takes to drive a gig I give him up. It is a peculiar kind of men who drive gigs: the thing is suggestive of a coarse, grazier-like mind.

"I know the custom of driving women out in gigs prevails in the colonies—I forget whether it is in India or America that they

call it 'carting a spin'—meaning, I suppose, spinster. It is a dangerous practice, the proximity is too great, and the facility for long *tête-à-têtes* very bad. A man is generally lost who drives a woman in a gig. I once knew a man of excellent prospects, who married out of a gig, drove his wife home in a gig, and set up a family gig. Of course, he went to the devil, came to wear shooting jackets in the street, had his clothes made in the country, and finally took to tea-parties in a small town. Think of that!

"Besides, a gig spoils the sit of your pantaloons, makes them bag at the knee, and I don't think Elphick would like it. If you stay at Halifax all the winter I should run over to New York, that you may just see enough of the Americans to avoid them in future. Be sure to keep yourself in good health and training, that we may have no difficulty with Elphick and Meyer. You are too young for a stomach, but if one should

grow upon you, keep it down by all means.

"Yours affectionately,

"A. F."

Our destination was finally settled for Halifax, and the regiment seemed condemned to a long colonial service. I took an early opportunity of acting on my uncle's suggestion, and obtained a short leave to visit New York, in company with a Halifax merchant who was going there on business. I resigned myself entirely to his guidance, and we settled ourselves at what he called a first-rate boarding house—not one of the largest, but thought to be more comfortable on that account; about fifty or sixty sitting down daily to dinner.

Nothing could exceed the obtreperous joy of the Americans at their success at New Orleans, and I believe their excessive delight at "wapping the Britishers" secured us a friendly reception, the having beaten Wel-

lington's veterans being an unexpected feather in their caps. We had so long a passage, owing to calms, that little more than a week remained for our stay in New York; and during that time I scarcely made one acquaintance, certainly obtained an entrance into no private house.

I rather liked the rapid dispatch of the dinners, especially if it had been managed with somewhat less of scrambling and rudeness.

My friend the Nova Scotian disliked the Americans, particularly their rough prying manners, quenchless curiosity and total insensibility to refinement of feeling. He was an epicure in a small way, and managed through interest with one of the waiters to get little delicacies brought to him, of which I must do him the justice to say he always offered me a share.

One day he had a nice little salad handed to him, a great rarity, as it was early in the

season; and my friend took the greatest pain to dress it properly, beating up his egg, and mixing his oil and vinegar with much careful exactness. Immediately opposite him sat a rough fellow, extremely coarsely dressed, with at least a week's beard, and disgustingly dirty hands and face. This man had cleared away the eatables in his immediate neighbourhood, but when he fancied anything that was at all within reach, he leant over the persons near him, and with his own knife and fork helped himself to a great junk of the meat, and still, as he consumed it, kept looking out where he should go next.

At length his attention seemed to be taken with my neighbour's delicate cookery of the early salad, and as he bolted his meat he kept a watchful eye upon its progress towards perfection. One thing had been forgotten—the sugar; and my friend turned to the waiter to order it, when the man opposite, taking advantage of the diversion, started suddenly up,

reached across the table, and with his knife and fork, seized nearly all the salad, and conveyed it across to his own plate, when he dispatched it in company with the rest of his dinner; and, having shovelled up the sauce with his knife, left the table. The comic distress of my friend, as he watched the progress of the salad, truss after truss, into that capacious mouth, was amusing in the extreme. His only observation was: "Well, you might have waited till I had dressed it!"

Among the places of amusement that I went to in New York, the one which seems to me most worthy of notice, was a ball composed entirely of coloured people, mostly black, but with some brown, and even lighter tints, scattered amongst them.

The dresses, particularly of the men, for the women generally were much more quiet in their style, were really "stunning." Light blue coats and brass buttons were the prevailing taste. The collars were then worn very high,

and only just turned over at the top, from thence they came down in a firm roll half way down the breast. The waistcoat was also high in the collar, fully up to the ears, and the frill of the shirt four or five inches wide, and kept together with sundry brooches, stood out in front like an enormous cockscomb, or the fin of a great fish.

In my whole life I never saw such airs of consequence — such strutting, such fantastic bows, or such an extremity of etiquette.

Of course, as I went there, I must make myself a party to what was going on, so I singled out a very good-looking brown young lady, and went up and asked her to dance. I thought at first she had not heard me, for she made no reply, not even by a look. I, therefore, repeated the question, hoping that I was not so unfortunate as to find her engaged. Upon this, with a slight toss of her head, and turning half away, she replied:

"Upon my word, I not know you, Sar;

very rude in dis country speak to lady widout introduction, Sar."

I apologised for my ignorance, sought a black gentleman, who seemed to make himself very busy in calling the dances, and who was probably the master of the ceremonies, stated my case to him, and was then introduced in form.

I found that my fair partner's attention was so exclusively given to the correctness of her behaviour, that I could get very little out of her; she was also not a little occupied in thinking about her dress, which there was every reason to believe was exceedingly tight and uncomfortable. I danced with her, and exerted myself to play the agreeable, but I began, after a fair trial, to suspect that there was wanting some common chord of feeling between us, and my efforts were being rather thrown away. The lady got colder and colder, and at last began to pout. The best way, I think, in such cases is to come straight to the point, so I asked her plainly what was the matter. Had I said or done any-

thing wrong? Did she want me to go away, or to dance with anybody else? Was I, in short, disagreeable to her?

"No, Sar, not disgreeble, like bery well, Sar, talk bery well, Sar, make lub, Sar, no harm in dat, Sar, but can't talk and laugh when most choked, Sar. Like a leely, leely, leely, *leely* drop o' rum, Sar."

This supplied, in rather a larger proportion than the request would have seemed to call for, I found my burnt umber friend sufficiently chatty, and certainly anything but morose or ill-natured.

In a day or two afterwards we returned to Halifax, without any regret on my part. The boarding-house life I detest, with the great annoyance of feeding in public, and the risk of losing your fingers in the scramble.

Although I have not made the reader acquainted with the fact, yet I was exceedingly sorry to hear from my uncle of the terrible misfortune that had befallen my poor Aunt Jack,

whose uniform kindness to me I felt deserved every return. In the letter which I wrote in answer, I made every inquiry about her, but strange to say, he had taken no notice whatever on the subject since his first letter had almost incidentally mentioned the fact. What, however, was to me still more strange, my excellent friend, Dr. Mellish, to whom I immediately wrote, had never answered my letter; an omission, considering the importance of the subject, and his extremely punctual habits, which I could nowise account for. Of course I had not a doubt about the propriety (I supposed necessity) of her being put under restraint. She had always been what people called odd, certainly very eccentric in some things, and I naturally concluded that this eccentricity had resulted in insanity. On my return to Halifax, I recognised his writing with extreme pleasure. This was his letter:—

"My dear young Friend,

"Your letter of April last was only delivered

to me a few days ago (he wrote in November). I need not say that if I had been acquainted with the subject of its contents, I should have written to you long ago. Soon after the abdication of Napoleon, I indulged myself in a long-cherished project of paying a visit to the continent, from which we have been so long shut out, and I hastened in the first place to Paris. I will not trouble you with any narrative of my travels, or the impressions which so many novelties made upon my mind, but will come at once to the more serious subject of your aunt's derangement, which I only heard of on my return. It appears that very shortly after my leaving home, Mr. Featherstone, her eldest brother, who lives somewhere in Norfolk, and whom I believe you have never seen, came suddenly to your aunt's on a visit, accompanied by a friend. They staid only two days, but it was observed that the other gentleman, who was quite a stranger to Miss Featherstone, busied himself in making inquiries about her, not only of her own servants, but the people of the neighbourhood,

and for this information he paid extremely well.

"By what I can understand, he went principally among those who were not intimately acquainted with her, who might have observed her peculiarities, without having sufficient knowledge of her to excuse or explain them, and as far as I can make out, by sifting the witnesses; the evidence he took down was only that which seemed to confirm the fact of her derangement. A few days after, Mr. Featherstone and his friend returned a second time, and prevailed upon the unfortunate lady to go out with them in a carriage. A few things were put up in a box by the servant, and she was taken no one knows where, and from that time nothing more has been heard of her. That she is placed in some private lunatic asylum I have no doubt; certainly under restraint, or I should have heard from her. She was perfectly well when I left, and the servants say that no alteration had taken place

in her. My opinion is, that she is as sane as I am, and the whole proceeding a deliberate plan to get possession of her property. Her servants were discharged by Mr. Featherstone, and are gone, and the house is shut up.

"I wrote immediately on my ascertaining all this to Colonel Featherstone, and received a short answer, to the effect that he had no doubt his brother knew what he was about, and that he, the colonel, always thought her decidedly mad.

"Here the matter rests at present; I, as a friend merely, hardly know how to act, nor can you, I imagine, stir in it till you are of age; but have you no influence with the colonel, who seems kind to you, to induce him to do an act of common humanity and justice to his own sister? Let us only see her, and know that she is deranged, and her friends will have no more to say.

"Ever yours most sincerely,

"Rob. Mellish."

This letter came upon me like a clap of thunder: I had heard of such things taking place, but little thought I should ever have them brought home into my own family. I wrote at once to my uncle, stated my sincere affection for my aunt, admitted her many eccentricities, but assured him of my most earnest conviction of her sanity, and of my resolution to get leave at the earliest opportunity for the purpose of visiting and ascertaining the facts myself.

To this letter, I had no opportunity of receiving an answer at Halifax, for news arrived shortly after it was dispatched of the escape of Buonaparte from Elba, and this was followed by an order for us to embark, and sail for Portsmouth, there to receive further orders as to our future destination. The excitement produced by this great event put, for a time, our little domestic tragedy into the background.

CHAPTER VI.

TO BELGIUM AND FRANCE.

We had an unusually short run to Portsmouth, staid there two days, and then sailed to Ostend, from whence we marched to Ghent. Here Louis XVIII. had taken refuge, and much to our annoyance we were retained as guards over his sacred person. On the 16th of June, we distinctly heard the roar of a great engagement, and rumours came the next day that the Prussians and Lord Wellington's army had been beaten, and that Napoleon was in full march upon Brussels. On the afternoon of

the 18th there came a louder roar of guns, kept up steadily for an hour or more, then slackening, then booming up again, and even increasing towards night, till it died away as darkness came on. It was a night of intense anxiety: reports of all kinds had come in during the day, principally favourable to the French. The Flemings went on with their daily work, and seemed to care but very little which side would gain the day.

The next day the great news arrived, and with it an order for us to march upon Paris. This was performed with such rapidity, that we reached that capital within three weeks after we had left North America, including the stay at Portsmouth and Ghent: pretty well, considering that steam had nothing to do with it, and that the land part of the journey was performed on foot.

It would be easy to fill this book with a review of the great events of that most eventful time; but these are more appropriately left to

the historian, and would be out of place in a mere personal narrative, such as this. We were encamped near Paris, and paid frequent, almost daily visits to that luxurious but uncomfortable capital. The English were popular, from their greater restraint of manners, and the national habit of paying for what they had. The Prussians, on the contrary, behaved with extreme haughtiness, not to say brutality; bullied the hotel keepers, and frequently omitted the ceremony of paying for their entertainment. The loss of caste was, however, as nothing to the personal indignity they inflicted on the natives. We subsequently moved into cantonments, in the neighbourhood of Valenciennes.

Shortly before I left Paris, my uncle wrote me the following letter, partly in answer to mine, making inquiries as to what had become of my aunt:—

"My dear Boy,

"I wonder you should trouble yourself about

that poor crazy old creature; I understand she is well taken care of, and certainly more fit for Bedlam than to be at large. I can't tell you exactly where she is, but my brother has kindly undertaken to see that she wants for nothing. I hope you don't think of getting any clothes made in Paris, for the taste there in men's costume is abominable. It is impossible for any man to look like a gentleman in Paris cut clothes. Their waistcoats only are tolerable. There is no individuality shown in a Frenchman's dress: if hats a yard high are in fashion, every one must get a hat a yard high. No one thinks of modifying the prevailing fashion to his own figure, and they are ready to adopt any monstrous costume, rather than not have a change—the cossack trowsers, for example. I shall send you some clothes in a week or so, if you will only let me know what you want.

"Yours, &c.,

"A. F."

I clearly saw that nothing was to be got out of my uncle relative to my unfortunate Aunt Jack, so determined to get leave the first opportunity, and unravel the mystery if possible. In the meantime I wrote to Mr. Featherstone, senior, but that worthy returned no answer.

During the autumn of the first year of our sojourn in France with the army of occupation, I received a letter from my friend Strong, who was on leave, saying, in a few words, that he had sent in his papers to sell out; that he had made proposals in due form to Miss Weggs, which had been duly accepted, and that they both requested, as a particular favour, that I would come over and assist at the wedding: Strong adding that, as the match had been mainly brought about by my advice, such a concession on my part would be all but indispensable.

Not a little glad of an excuse for getting away from the dreary country in which we were quartered, and intending to combine my

own little business with the pleasure of this matrimonial trip, I applied for, and obtained with some difficulty, leave of absence for a month, and made my appearance at the cottage already spoken of in these Memoirs, and celebrated for the sharp and earnest practice of Mr. Strong in the courting line, on our march from Brighton to Portsmouth, two years previously.

I was received by the family of Weggs generally with tumultuous affection, the exceptions being in the cases of Mr. Weggs, and his second daughter, Lizzy, whom the reader may probably remember was so obligingly consigned to me by my friend Strong, during his moonlight promenade in the garden. Mr. Weggs's reception was marked by a holy gratitude, and a silent eloquence, far too deep for words. Taking my hand between his, he pressed it fervently towards his bosom, casting his eyes aloft, while a quivering lip betrayed the intensity of his feelings. Holding me thus in

mute thankfulness for a moment, while the assembled family stood awestruck around, he probably felt that he could not trust himself to speak, so gently cast me off to his wife—a gesture which plainly said: "There, he's all I could wish—take—cherish—embrace your son-in-law!"

Mrs. Weggs's conduct was homely, motherly, and kindly business-like. Shaking me warmly by the hand, she rather held out a face, at the same time quietly drawing me towards her. This I knew meant a kiss, and to a lady of Mrs. Weggs's experience none but a hearty one would suffice; so I abandoned the hand, and clasping her round the neck inflicted a hearty smack upon her matron lips, a proceeding which was received with a low murmur of applause by the assembled family. Next to her stood Miss Weggs—Marianne—arm-in-arm with her intended, Mr. Strong, who kindly held her towards me, and I could do no less than avail myself of the obliging offer

implied. Then came Lizzy—my Lizzy—looking passively down, with a maidenly hand timidly advanced in front of her bodice. I now saw at a glance the responsibility I had incurred by my impulsive conduct in the matter of Mrs. Weggs, a responsibility which would only finish with the last-born of the family, nay hardly there, for at the end of the long tail of seventeen or eighteen, ranged according to seniority, the line winding to suit the capabilities of the apartment, stood the ready Maria with two babies in her arms—the two last arrows in the family quiver.

When one has a thing to do, it is generally polite to throw as much heartiness as possible into the achievement, modified of course by peculiar circumstances. I saluted the pale-eyed Lizzy with affectionate decorum; cold Jemima with congenial frigidity; steady Peg with respectful consideration for the train of thought she might be engaged in; the delicate Mary with a due regard for her state of health; and

getting louder and louder in my smacks as I proceeded, finished off the twins with a right and left shot which edified the whole family and moved Mrs. Weggs to tears.

Mr. Weggs was a man absolutely built up with children, they were always crawling about him, sometimes well-nigh covered him up, and like a cairn by the wayside, every passing year added something to the heap. They climbed him as they would a tree, dodged about his legs, and played hide and seek under his coat-tails. His business was with the infant part of the family. On his knee he had always a baby—at this particular crisis two—either crowing, or crying, or kiddling, and to whose infant wants, whether of eyes, nose, or mouth, it was his peculiar pleasure to attend.

Mrs. Weggs was emphatically a mother. She had no energies unconnected with children: to perpetually introduce babies into the world, and to have them duly washed, combed, christened, confirmed, physicked and brought

up, was the great combined scheme of her life; and next to the pleasure of being actively engaged in this object, her greatest solace was in talking about it. She rarely got through a sentence without either the words child or children in it, and even when she had recourse to the pronouns, it was a safe bet of two to one, that the he or the she turned out to be under twelve.

After I had been duly presented and acknowledged by the whole family, about thirteen or fourteen of them were sent to pursue their avocations elsewhere; and Mrs. Weggs beckoning me to the corner of a sofa, proceeded to enlighten me on the subject of her family. Being of rather a rambling turn, the reader will probably excuse my spinning off to him any connected thread of her narrative. Suffice it to say that in that two hours' conference, I was made acquainted with much that was interesting on the subject of her large experiences, together with many minute particulars, personal as well as mental, of the

Weggses, which, but for my position as an expected member of the family, it would have been superfluous, not to say in some slight degree improper, that I should have been intrusted with.

To that conference, I attribute my limited knowledge of infancy in general, and of that of the Weggs family in particular. She told them off one by one in the order of their birth, to the number of sixteen living and seven buried. Marianne, poor thing, had had the chicken-pox—such a dreadful load that it quite puzzled Mr. Wizen, but as a set-off her other infantile ailments were comparatively light. Lizzy, in spite of all precautions, had caught the small-pox: and here the fond mother dwelt upon the sufferings of that patient cherub, till Maria, who happened at the moment to be carrying a few children past to bed, threw in a corrective word.

"But Lizzy had it very mild! oh, Lizzy had it very mild!"

"Very mild in its consequences, certainly,"

pursued Mrs. Weggs, "for she had neither speck nor spot, not one anywhere." And here she put her hand to her mouth to screen the sound from all present, and convey it to my privileged ear only, "neither speck nor spot, anywhere!"

From Lizzy she went gradually downwards to the twins. I found that the cold soil of Jemima had borne more than one "heavy crop," and that steady Peg, till she turned out a thinker, had been the madcap of the family. Poor Mary was the despair of the faculty, but having survived three physicians and apothecaries so numerous that I did not attempt to charge my memory with them, she seemed in a fair way of getting over her ailments under the inestimable Wizen.

Thinking it would be pleasant to Mrs. Weggs's maternal feelings to take an interest in these details, I took pains to remember the catalogue of the family complaints.

"I think you said, my dear Ma'am, that

you had had fourteen cow-poxes, one small ditto?"

"Yes, but neither speck nor spot!"

"Twelve chickens, ten meazles, eleven hooping coughs?"

"Yes, but Marianne's was ve—ry slight."

"Seven scarlet fevers, two croups, two terrible teethings?"

"Three, Sir, including my sainted Bobby."

"Eight red-gums, five ringworms, besides poor Miss Mary?"

"Ah, if ever there was a martyr, she's one, I'm sure!"

"But Lizzy was very patient! oh, Lizzy was very patient!" chimed in Maria, as she carried past another batch of babies.

We had a hot supper for my especial behoof, as I came some hours after the family dinner, and retired early that we might all be fresh for the glories of the following eventful day; but the whisking of petticoats up the stairs, and the smothered sounds from the

lower premises, indicated that preparations were being carried on during the greater part of the night.

At six in the morning Strong came and sat upon my bedside, to confer upon the great event which was about to take place, and to extract my unbiassed opinion as to whether it really would contribute to his advantage.

"Of course, my dear fellow: I have known your wife now I may say since she was born—nay, I am not quite sure if I am not acquainted with a sympton or two before that auspicious event—and I can truly congratulate you on having a sound and healthful lady. Her chicken was rather heavy, but her hooping cough was ve—ry slight, and since then she had really had nothing at all to signify. Her teething passed off with extreme mildness—a sure indication of an angelic temper; and even if it had been as bad as sainted Bobby's I have no doubt she would have had equal claims to be canonized. Indeed, I have not

the slightest doubt that, both mentally and morally, she is like her charming sister Lizzy, and has neither speck nor spot—not one."

Assured by my good opinion, my friend prepared to submit with resignation to his now inevitable fate.

We all came down to breakfast extremely fine. Mr. Weggs had a new blue coat, and the most shining buttons for the occasion; and the blues, and roses, and whites of the ladies typified the hope, and joy, and innocence of all. The hero of the day was dressed, by particular desire, in a blue military surtout, frogged and embroidered with black lace, and while the procession was being formed, I overheard the bride whisper:

"Oh, Roger! if you could but limp a little, it would show how badly you have been wounded; and I should like all the world to know that I am to be married to a hero."

My literal friend, who happened to have suffered about equally in both limbs, was much

puzzled to sustain a limp in the two at once; and I am afraid hopped to church in a manner never before attempted by anybody, hero or other.

Mr. Weggs took the bride, Strong hobbled after with Lizzy, and Mrs. Weggs fell to my share; taking care to improve the occasion by frequent allusions to her fair daughter in front, and whispering emphatically more than once: "Neither speck nor spot, I assure you."

I believe that every Weggs, even to the twins, was in church on that great occasion. The little ones who could walk had started early to secure a good place, and Maria laboured in the rear with the two neskulls.

It was scarcely so affecting a ceremony as I have seen it on other occasions. Mr. and Mrs. Weggs bore the bereavement as affectionate parents might be supposed to bear the loss of one out of sixteen or eighteen (for I never could exactly say how many they were in family; in fact, it was a sort of floating capital, which

varied from year to year, and would have puzzled any head not immediately interested in the sum total. Marianne, as Mrs. Weggs subsequently observed, was wonderfully composed, considering the great importance of the occasion; an observation, I have no doubt, elicited from the fond mother by some visionary contemplation of a coming family as numerous as her own. Lizzy's interesting face wore a quiet, hopeful smile, and the cold Jemima seemed warmed up to tepid temperature for this occasion only. As for Margaret, she was deep in a train of thought, touching the future prospects of the happy couple.

On the return homeward, I was favoured with the fair arm of Lizzy; and I fancied, from the nodding and whispering in front, and the trifling giggle behind, that speculations were afloat as to another wedding in the family.

About a dozen intimate friends of the family were assembled at the *déjeûner* and as many Weggses as could, without danger of suffocation,

be crammed into the room. Mrs. Weggs, in the pride of her heart, took occasion to whisper that Lizzy made the cake—a little assisted by Jemima and Margaret—but the whole credit of course was due to her; and when I was subsequently invited to taste it, the invitation was backed with a significant "I'm sure *you* can't refuse it." Mrs. Weggs was quite taken out of her usual caution by the existing nature of the occasion, and would have injudiciously crammed the younger portions of the family, but for the ready Maria, who adroitly whispered such cautions as "I shall have to go to Wizen's after this," or "Mind me, if she don't wan't a pill to-night, that's all."

The health of bride and bridegroom were duly given by an old friend of the family, who after treating at some length upon the theme "none but the brave deserve the fair," touched on the loss which the family would sustain, though throwing in some playful allusions as to the vacancy being speedily filled

up. These toasts being duly responded to, a little gentleman, who had a habit of jumping up upon his seat and then turning smartly to his right and left neighbours, rose and proposed "Success to the next wedding in the family;" which having relieved himself of, he resumed his seat, and executing his usual jump, appealed to the right and left for a confirmation of his having done rather a clever thing.

Although I felt that the eyes of the whole company were furtively cast my way, and I had no doubt that it was expected that I should pronounce on the occasion, yet I thought that, as no love passages had yet taken place between me and the fair Elizabeth, it would be somewhat premature to take any direct notice of the toast. It was in fact rather too strong a measure, considering the very vague relations between me and the lady, which had made no advance at all upon my friend Strong's gratuitous proposal on my part in the garden

scene; so, notwithstanding Mrs. Weggs's frank expression of face, muttering lip and slight wave of the hand, which I knew to mean "Not a speck!" I thought it prudent to remain mute; while Mr. Weggs in an attempt at a humorous answer rather, I thought, broke down. It was clear that my silence cast an air of disappointment and constraint over the company, which it required three more bumper toasts to dissipate.

At length the chaise rattled up, which was to take the happy pair to their temporary seclusion. "Love is a native of the rocks," says somebody, so they selected the Bognor Rocks as being the most accessible; so much so indeed, as to admit of the whole family dropping in upon them occasionally during the short sojourn of a week which they purposed remaining there; after which they removed, with two or three of the girls to keep them company, to a small house presented to them by Mr. Strong, the elder, whose declining health,

it was thought, would render any active pursuit on his son's part unnecessary. The business which brought me being over, I tore myself from this interesting family the same evening, and reached London by the mail early next morning.

I had not previously informed my uncle of my having obtained leave of absence; and on calling at his house, I was informed that he was gone down to shoot at the house of one of his noble friends in the country. I was not very sorry for this, as it gave me more liberty to pursue my own plans relative to my unfortunate Aunt Jack.

I began by writing to Dr. Mellish, to say that I purposed the infliction of a short visit upon him; and by return of post received not only a cordial invitation to spend a month or as much longer as would be convenient or pleasant with him, but the very important information that he had succeeded by means of the post-boy in discovering that the car-

riage containing Mr. and Miss Featherstone and the other person, had passed through Oxford in the night, changing horses at the "Bell," and that there was every reason to believe that the same carriage and parties were still remembered at Wycombe, beyond which they merged in the great throng of vehicles moving towards the metropolis, and no turnpike man or hostler could charge his memory with them after daylight.

This, however, was enough for me; I determined to begin at High Wycombe, and spend the remainder of my month in the search; doubting whether it would be expedient to inform my uncle of my being in England at all, lest he should procure an invitation for me into the country, and so defeat me in the cherished object I had in view; but I wrote immediately to decline the Doctor's invitation, in consequence of the information he had given me.

I never on any subsequent occasion remember to have felt so entirely miserable and down-

hearted as I did that day in London. I could not escape from the shadow of the coming event which seemed to wrap me in its dismal pall. I detested the gaiety of the streets, and sought a refuge in the Parks, hoping by violent exercise to drive away an undefinable and unaccountable sense of oppression. I had walked several times round Hyde Park, returned homewards through the Green Park, and after a turn or two round St. James's Park, and as it was still too early for dinner, sat down on one of the seats in the Mall. I must have mused there for at least an hour, when I observed, though not looking at him, that a man in passing threw his arm out in a horizontal line, and sweeping the hand round to the front of his hat, executed a military salute, of which I unquestionably was the object, there being no other person whatever in the immediate neighbourhood.

He was a sunburnt, hard-featured fellow, about the middle age, dressed in a brown velveteen shooting jacket, a red and white cotton

handkerchief tied round his neck, cord breeches, leather leggings to meet a pair of high-laced nailed boots, and he wore on his head a limp hat, with very long fur, and somewhat worn at the edges. On a second glance, I had no great difficulty in recognising an old soldier of my own regiment, discharged two months since; a man of a daring, determined character.

I caught at my new acquaintance as a god-send, and invited him to take a seat and tell me what he was doing, and what line of life he intended to pursue, his appearance indicating something of a gamekeeper, or perhaps a higgler, or one who hawks crockery about the country. He was more substantial than a navigator, and his clothes, though coarse, were decidedly whole and sound.

My friend hardly knew what to do. He had thought of all the occupations his appearance suggested, and either of which would suit him; but having still a little money and a pension to fall back upon, he was looking out for some

situation of trust and good pay, where firmness would be a recommendation.

"For two years before I 'listed," he continued, "I was under-keeper in a lunatic asylum."

"Where?" I inquired eagerly.

"Down in Norfolk," was the discouraging reply.

And yet, as my uncle resided in Norfolk, there was some probability of his selecting an asylum in that county for his sister, where she would be under his own supervision, and in some degree his own control. It was well known that the greatest abuses at that time prevailed in private asylums, that gross cases of violence and fraud were practised, and which indeed, from a rather recent trial, it would appear are not wholly discontinued even now.

I sat for some time musing and perplexed, hardly venturing to fix on any plan, and doubtful of the propriety of opening the matter even by a question about the Norfolk asylums,

when my friend, tired of my abstraction, rose to go away.

On a sudden my resolution was taken. Asking him to sit down again, I plunged at once into the subject; told him that a near relation of mine had been carried away from her home, brought by night towards London, and traced as far as High Wycombe, that I believed she was shut up in some asylum as a lunatic—to which her eccentric habits gave some pretence—and that I was resolved, if I could discover her retreat, to set her free at all hazards, but whether by law or any other method remained for consideration.

"And quite right too," said my companion. "I have seen sich things done in them places as would make your blood run cold—poor naked critters chained down and lying on straw, winter after winter, and made mad at last if they wasn't so at first. It's easy enough to make a man mad, and easier still a woman: taunt 'em, and teaze 'em, and whip 'em well.

and break their rest, and let 'em hear the howling, and screeching, and screaming of them as be really mad about 'em, and you'll get 'em as mad as you like in a couple of months; but a lady sooner nor that—I'd give a lady six weeks. Now I don't know nothing about Wycombe, but I be'ant a man to say a thing as I can't do. I'll find her out if she's above ground, especially if she's in a waistcoat, or it's a bad case, as a Tearer or a Smasher or sich like. A Tearer's one of them as rip everything to pieces, clothes and bedclothes, or you or me, or what not as they can catch hold on. Some puts 'em in a waistcoat, but they wears out the waistcoats shocking; so as that's an expense as falls upon the house, many don't waistcoat 'em unless they tear themselves, which would soon finish 'em, and then, you see, the allowance would go, so they gives 'em a old blanket or something to begin with, and plenty of straw, and if they chooses to rip it up and 'bide naked, why that's their look-out. Then

the Smashers is them as pitches themselves again the walls, or the bars of the windows, and mostly their heads. Them's troublesome, and takes up a deal of room, because they're obliged to be fastened in the middle of the cell to keep 'em off the walls, and tight down, as they should raise themselves up and pitch down upon their heads. Then there's the Coaxers as tries to 'tice you to 'em, and fastens on you like a bull-dog. It's sich as these as I always had to do with. I don't know nothink of the Delusions—the kings, and queens, and emperors, and lovers, and sich. Ah! to be sure, now I think of it, I had one of them Delusions, too. Well, he was a queer fellow: a man of property he was, and orders was to supply him with all as he wanted; but, Lord, he didn't want nothink but pen, ink, and paper, and wax, and wafers, and plenty of messengers to carry out his letters to the post. To be sure, how he did write! to everybody as ever he'd heerd tell

of, and some as never lived at all, I used a'most to think. There was Cheeks, the marine, as he wrote to twice a day for years, directing to all parts of the world, because he couldn't justly say where he was, having no settled home, and not knowing whether he was afloat or ashore.

"Then there was old Cole of Windsor, as he wrote no end of letters to; and after he'd write to Old King Cole to know the reason as he didn't hear from his relation at Windsor, and hoping as there was nothing the matter as he didn't write, because he used to say, as being elderly men, they warn't likely to be a running about all over the world like Cheeks. And Hookey Walker he'd write to, but I can't justly say what he said to him: and Mr. Fergusson was another on 'em, asking him how he got on with his lodgings, and if he'd got 'em as reasonable as he expected. But bless you, Sir, I can't tell you half as he wrote to, and I didn't covet much the care of them

sort, there's too much chaff for me: now, if so be as you has to do with a Tearer, or sich like, you knows what you has to do; you knows as you got a wild beast to deal with, as will master you if you can't master him, so keep on your guard, like. Lord! haven't I had scenes with 'em, that's all! Why, I had charge of No. 42, as eat a keeper—leastways a part of him, and then goes and dresses hisself up in his entrails, he did; that was a fellow as would rip you up like a tiger. But if so be as you wish it, I'll find your relation, never fear. I'll go down to Wycombe to-night, and I'll hunt all day to-morrow and Saturday; and if I don't write, you may depend I'll have something to tell you Monday morning next at twelve o'clock, here in this place. I've got my certificate of service in the other place here, and I'll take that with me, and be looking for a situation which will give me an excuse for going to them places, and if I don't find out from the keepers who they has there,

never trust me. They won't suspect me, as I'm a old keeper myself."

I thought there was something business-like in this, notwithstanding the rambling of the speaker's narrative, so placing abundant funds at his disposal, I prepared to wait patiently for the three days which must elapse before I met him again in the same spot in the Mall.

On the Saturday morning, two days before the appointed time, the postman brought me a dirty, crumpled note, containing these words :

" Honoured Sir,

" I've lagged her, and no mistake. On Monday you shall hear all about it. So no more at present, from

" JOHN HUSSEY."

The letter had no date, but bore the post-mark of Harrow-on-the-Hill.

On Monday, at the appointed time, or indeed I may say nearly an hour before it, I was most impatiently walking up and down the Mall, but it was near one o'clock before any signs of Mr. Hussey were apparent. At length, a man came up, leading a pointer and two small terriers in a chain, and accosting me in a voice I never remembered to have heard before, if I wanted a dog. Chafed with the long time I had been waiting, I answered somewhat pettishly in the negative, and the man, still pressing me, and vaunting the praises of the animals he was leading, I rose hastily from the seat, and walked away. Then it was, that bursting into a laugh, I recognised in the dog-fancier my ex-keeper, Mr. Hussey, but so completely disguised, that his oldest creditor, if he had one, would have been at fault in his identity. The man was exceedingly pleased at the complete success of his disguise, which was effected by a black wig, and a complete change

of apparel, which still in its general style, bore the character of the old one.

"Bless ye, Sir," he began, "it wouldn't have done no how for me to go down as myself to make inquiries; and, thinks I, I'll try it on upon him to see if he knows me, and now I'm quite satisfied. Well, Sir, I went down to Wycombe by a Gloucester waggon, Thursday night, and you may be sure I got all I could out of the driver, and the people on the road where we stopped to bait and change, but they know'd nothing; and when I got to Wycombe, I was about as wise as when I started. So I looked about in Wycombe, and soon saw which public had the most custom, and in I goes there, and sat a quietly drinking and smoking and saying nothink to nobody, and at last when the room got pretty full, I up and put a question to the landlord. Says I, 'landlord, you don't know any one as wants a hand, do you?' says I. 'I wants work,' says I, 'and don't hardly know where to look for it,' says I.

'Well,' says the landlord, 'what be you fit for, be you a gamekeeper, or what?' 'No,' says I, 'I be'ant a gamekeeper, but I knows all about it, and ready enough to be one, or a under-keeper, or anything reasonable,' says I, 'or a bailiff,' says I, 'or almost anything. And,' says I, 'rather than not do nothing, I'd go to my old trade.' 'What was that?' says he; so I up and told him I'd been a keeper in a highly respectable asylum, in Norfolk, where they took none but real ladies and gentlemen, and hadn't no low lunatics whatsomever.

"'Ah,' says the landlord, 'I'm afraid as you haven't much chance in that line, for we've only two asylums just about here; but,' says he, 'if you like you can try.' So he gives me the names of the places, and when I'd found as there was only two about there, I said no more, but smoked on till quite the arternoon, and then went to my lodging and went to bed. Well, the next morning early I goes to both the 'sylums and asked for employment, but, as it

happened, they didn't want none; but while we was chaffing, I wormed all I could out of the head keepers, and found as they had only one lady, a young one, in one assylum and none at all in the other; so I knew that was no go. One on 'em, however, recommended me to go to a place on the Harrow road, about ten mile off, where they'd got a set of devils as nobody hardly could manage, and a very increasing business, by reason the head man would take anybody a'most; 'and,' says the keeper to me, 'you're a likely-looking fellow, you are, and don't look as if you'd be timid with 'em. I think you're just the man they wants.' So I set myself straight for that place, and gets there in a couple of hours. Well, it's a lonesome place to be sure, up a lane, and no house within a mile as I see, a strong brick building, in a garden surrounded by a high wall, and the cell windows barred uncommon well. But, howsomever, I goes up to the door and axes for the gentleman as had the house. 'And what do

you want with him?' says the man as opened the door. 'Why,' says I, 'I want a situation. I've been under-keeper at so-and-so, down in Norfolk, and if I could get a place hereabout,' says I, 'I wouldn't go back there. You've a choice, quiet place here,' says I, 'there an't no fear of their squeaking bringing nobody down upon you here,' says I. So with that he grinned and says 'I believe you there,' says he, 'you seems to know a thing or two about it,' says he. 'I should think so,' says I; 'I hadn't charge of fourteen of the devilishest critters as ever lived, and one on 'em, No. 42, as eat the keeper,' says I, 'and after dressed hisself up in his entrails,' says I, 'and not know how to manage the devilishest Tearer or Smasher as ever lived. And,' says I, 'do you run much in that line, or is it Delusions as you have mostly?' So the keeper, when he heered this, axed me as I was one on 'em, says he, 'come in,' says he, 'and you and I'll smoke a pipe together; I should like to hear of that No. 42. I've heered of

queer things,' says he, 'but never of eating a keeper.'

"Well, with that we went in, and I told him a deal of what I knew, and summit as I didn't know, and very surprising things they was to be sure; 'and,' says he, 'I think you must be worse down your way than we are here, for we haven't got nothink like that here away,' says he. 'Well,' says I, 'what do you run in, is it Delusions, or what?' 'Well,' says he, 'we have some o' them—' and then he stopped short, and went on smoking his pipe, and kept quite dark like. Well after a bit, says I, 'you'll excuse me, Sir,' says I, 'but I've been bad in the bowels lately,' says I, 'and I always carry a drop of brandy about me; and,' says I, 'perhaps you'll taste it, for it ain't physic.' 'After you,' says he; so I made believe to take a good pull, and handed it to him, and when he tastes it's real French brandy (some as I brought over) he kept his lips to it, and half finished the flask. Says he, 'that's

rare stuff; where did you get it?' Says I, 'I got it where I can get more, and as much as I like.' 'That's a great thing,' says he, 'there's no mistake about that: I wish you was one of us,' says he, 'you're a chap as I like,' says he, 'you be'ant chicken-hearted, nor over scrupulous;' so I gives him a wink over the bottle, as I put it up to my head again.

"Well, Sir, by the time the brandy was done we got on right well, and he told me all about the place, as they'd got some as wasn't mad yet, and here he winked again at me quite knowing like, 'cos he knew I understood all them dodges. 'And,' says he, after he telled me of several cases, 'there's a rum old devil here,' says he, 'a woman,' says he, (I ax your pardon, Sir,) 'as gives us a deal of trouble, and I'm most afraid as she won't go mad, though a seems a most like it sometimes too, but master's paid well for her, and 'twont be no fault of his'n if he don't keep her.' So then I put some questions to him, and found

as she came out of Gloucestershire, and the description answered well to what you give me, and no doubt that's your relation, leastways I'd lay two to one upon it."

Mr. Hussey then went on to inform me that they didn't just then want an assistant, but if he would leave them his address, they would write; but being too knowing for this, he promised to call again in a fortnight, in case he should be unsuccessful elsewhere; and in the meantime the keeper promised to exert all his interest in his favour with the Principal, who then happened to be out. My emissary further informed me that he had scanned the premises well, had measured with his eye the height of the windows from the ground during a walk in the garden, which the keeper had invited him to in hopes of the Principal's return; and in short he was master of the general plan and capabilities of the premises.

"Now, Sir," continued Mr. Hussey, "you are to consider if it's worth while to wait till

I'm engaged, which may be in a fortnight, may be not at all, or six months' time; or whether you'd like me to go in for a crack, and I'll warrant I fetch her out, and no mistake. It's sixteen miles from town, and three of it's a bad country lane; there'll be a cart and a fast horse wanted, a ladder as takes to pieces, about fourteen foot, a jemmy, some skeletons, and the rest of the tools, arms of some sort, for we've to do with madmen as well as keepers, and another good hand as can be depended upon, or two, if so be as you don't want to stand in, for fear of mischief; if you do, one will do. You'd better take him at fifteen pound, Sir," continued he, looking at the dog; "there ain't a better within twenty mile of London, stands and backs, down-charge, and retrieves by land or water, never cowed with wet, carries his head well up, and never breaks fence: look at his short nose and high feet, and he've a tail like a tobacco-pipe. He's of the Derby breed; he is, and cheap at five-and-twenty pound, only

I'm a poor man as can't afford to keep him."

This, though addressed to me, was meant for the ears of a young gentleman looking at the dog from the other side of the tree, but who, finding the price a little beyond his mark, walked on.

Although I had determined to rescue my aunt if possible, yet I rather shrunk from the means proposed, when they came to be so bluntly laid before me. If I had had any one in town to apply to, I should certainly have done so, provided he had been worthy of my confidence; but I knew not a soul, excepting a few slight acquaintances, to whom I had been introduced by my uncle, whom it would have been absurd to entrust with a weighty matter such as this. I took the day to consider of it, and told the man to meet me at Covent Garden Market at nine that night. The rest of the day I spent in considering what was best to be done. I knew well that I should incur my

uncle's displeasure; but he was an indolent man, who entertained no long resentments, and as he could have no immediate interest in keeping my aunt confined, it surely could not mortally offend him to see her at liberty. I did not go to her lawyers, because I knew that he hated men of that profession, and to be dragged into legal proceedings, was perhaps the most distasteful thing which could happen to him, next to being seduced into employing an inferior tailor. I dined at the "Piazza" to be in the neighbourhood of the place appointed; and probably the good cheer and the generous wine of that first-rate establishment in those days, somewhat assisted to overcome my scruples. At nine o'clock I went out amongst the cabbage-stalls, determined at all hazards to rescue my Aunt Jack.

My friend Hussey was punctual to his appointment, and perceptibly cheered up when I told him of my resolution. He was one of those men who like a bold stroke, and are ever

ready to volunteer in anything which promises an adventure, and was by no means over-scrupulous either as to the means employed, or the morality evinced. I stipulated, however, with him, that nothing whatever was to be taken from the house, but the lady and her own proper effects; and, in consideration of these conditions being observed, I promised, on the successful release of the prisoner, a reward of twenty pounds each to the men, besides paying the expense of the cart, of the ladder, tools, &c. I was to be again at the same place and time on the third evening, when, unless I should hear to the contrary, everything would be ready for starting that night. I then made Mr. Hussey an advance of cash for the necessary expenses, and then went to the theatre, feeling wonderfully unconscious that I was, in all probability, about to associate myself with a couple of accomplished housebreakers—that I had planned a burglary, and in a few days' time should render myself liable to be hanged!

Not that I was free from compunctious visitings during those three days, but it is very rare indeed that a man can't find some plausible excuse for his conduct. I consoled myself in the reflexion that I was not a mere thief, and drew largely upon every generous and noble sentiment: gratitude, justice, love of liberty, and hatred of every kind of fraud, tyranny and oppression; forgetting that unfortunately the hard law would be no party to honouring such cheques.

In the meantime, I did not forget the business I had in hand. Knowing my aunt's carelessness in regard to dress, besides thinking it expedient that she should come forth in one unknown at the establishment, I provided myself with a plain warm bonnet with sober ribbons, a female cloak, and a shawl, all packed in a small ladies' trunk. Besides these, I had a large Spanish cloak, and a fur cap which tied under the chin, which she might wear on the road; thinking it expedient that she should

not be recognised as a female, till she stepped out of the hackney coach into my lodgings; these I had taken care to provide the day before for my mother, expected from the country by an early coach, at which I should meet her, and bring her down to the house. Having taken every precaution which my ingenuity could suggest, I waited impatiently for the next important scene in the drama.

END OF VOL I.

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